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The Journal of GENERAL EDUCATION

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THE JOURNAL OF
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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Reuben Frodin

A NOTE of concern about the effectiveness of the job being done in higher education again pervades the *Journal.* As it has grown and developed, the American plan of education has had few fixed points of reference. There is the grand, pervasive idea of equality; there is the universal acceptance of the desirability of raising the standard of living; and there is the belief that operations to service large numbers must run automatically or semi-automatically.

These points of reference may be explained simply. The unprecedented opportunities of all kinds in a new country meant the parallel growth of ways of preparing persons to take advantage of them. The omnipresent example of the rising standard of living provided motivation for students. Mass-production approaches to education were inevitable to operate an educational system on the scale required. What has been accomplished was politically desirable, expedient, and practical.

The politician does not want to make, and the intellectual has failed to make clear to the man in the street, the distinction in higher education between equality of opportunity to learn to the extent of ability, and equality of progress (or recognition). Thus, the defensible hypothesis that "every young man and woman with the intellectual ability to profit from a course of study prescribed by a faculty of well-educated teachers should have the opportunity to pursue a college education" is equated with the proposition that "every young man or woman who has been certified as having completed high school is entitled to four years' training in any subject related to any job pursuit 'acceptable' to those who administer post–high-school education."

The proposition that the objective of higher education is to help people better their standard of living is accepted by most Americans, and questioned by a minority. But it must be recognized that the primacy which Americans attach to the practical—to things, ways of doing things, and methods of making things—has resulted in the subordination of intellectual exercise which sharpens man's ability to concern himself with problems which by definition are nonmaterialistic.

The educational system still operates mechanistically. Despite fifty years of criticism, the mechanical concept of eight years of elementary schooling, four years of secondary schooling, and four years of college work persists despite the fact that the purpose of the high school and the contents of secondary-school programs have altered radically. The student moves from one step to another rather mechanically. At the high-school level there are required for graduation fifteen or sixteen "Carnegie" units, and at the college level, 128 semester-hours more or less. Even in programs for Master's and Doctor's degrees at most universities progress in courses of study which, by stated objective, require a "contribution to knowledge" is measured by time spent.

The United States, as the wise and learned teacher who is Lebanon's Minister to this country and to the United Nations, Charles Malik, tells us on the following pages, is like a tremendously powerful giant who is just beginning to wake up. Then Mr. Malik asks: What will this giant do? When the hour comes, what will America's utterance be—the message that has been three hundred years in forming? The articulation of this message is "primarily intellectual," and the United States must "resort to rational elaboration much more than she has cared to so far." This job, says Mr. Malik, "is the responsibility of the great universities in refining and enlarging the American mind."

The articulation of America's message is primarily an intellectual job, and it springs from many broadly articulated—and some inarticulate—premises and hopes of our society. A foreigner finds it hard to understand why, when there is such tenacious defense of the *license* of free speech and press, there is not great concern with the thoughts and positive ideas which should follow. If he is impolite (as Mr. Malik is not), he suggests that we are "democratic" to a degree that every man's ideas are as good as the next man's, that we are materialistic, and we not only use the adding machine to count the Chevrolets leaving Flint but also for the students who are pulling the various dishes off the shelf in the educational cafeteria.

The contributors to this issue of the *Journal* continue to be concerned with practical means for the improvement of what they are doing in college classrooms. They are committed to the notion that there is a "general liberal teaching of men for intelligence in the conduct of their own lives as human individuals"—to borrow one of Alexander Meiklejohn's formulations of the central purpose of a liberal college. Messrs. Booth and Sargent ask for reading, discussion, and writing devoted to great works of literature as a means of restoring the value of the humanities to their rightful position in college education. Mr. Beardsley is concerned with the teaching of logic and the use of logic in the teaching of writing. He skilfully emphasizes, for example, the importance of having the student learn "some conception of the process of classification"; and by a kind of extrapolation the reader of Mr. Beardsley's article is permitted to suggest attention to the classification of knowledge, and its ordering, is of primary importance in the ordering of the curriculum and materials of a college program.

Mr. Fox, trying to find a more acceptable way to deal with college students' training in history, states that "it must be admitted that entering studens today are no only less able to read but have read far less than their prewar predecessors. To meet this situation, most colleges and universities are now tending to offer what amounts to two years of freshman instruction." Many courses, he says, have become impossibly difficult for all but a minority of entering college students. Mr. Fox does not enter into a detailed discussion of causes—but the suggestion that they include the exclusion of courses with intellectual content in the high schools and the use of mechanical means of measuring progress in the schools seems permissible.

We need wider acceptance of other points of reference in education. These are more subtly described and more difficult of achievement than equality of opportunity, high standards of living, and mass-production methods. We must move from liberalizing opinion in a political sense to liberalizing opinion in an intellectual sense. Politically liberalization means making men equal with respect to holding opinions; this has been a point of reference of our political and educational system for nearly two hundred years. Intellectual liberalization deals with the process of arriving at opinions with critical discrimination. This is a problem of the philosophy of kinds of knowledge, ways of knowing, and degrees of knowing.

A FOREIGNER LOOKS AT THE UNITED STATES

Charles Malik

THREE general feelings must overtake a sympathetic foreigner as he broods upon the American scene. There is first a profound sense of awe at America's tremendous material success. American industry and inventiveness have simply produced wonders. Is there a human material need or wish or even whim that has not called forth a gadget to satisfy it? In terms both of comforts available to ordinary men and of industrial capacity to produce in abundance the instruments necessary for the defense of peace and the prosecution of war, this country is the most astounding country, not only in the world, but throughout history.

The foreigner is likely to be struck in the second place by the fact that America resembles a huge giant who is just beginning to wake up to the fact that he is not alone nor can be left alone in the world, that he must try to get along with others who have been there all the time and who in fact are now pressing on him, and that in this necessary and sudden association something, perhaps something big, is expected of him. He is just beginning to rub his eyes and wake up to these expectations. In the daze of the moment, he half-believes what his eyes are just beginning to see, half-wishes it were not true, half-hopes things will so work out that all will go back to normal, namely, to a state of affairs where he is again left alone, without bother, without headache, without responsibility, without danger. At any rate he is still debating the issue. Despite America's phenomenal capacity to rejoice in and adjust to the novel and untried, despite the unrelenting tacit insistence of the world upon America to come out and lead, and despite the real progress that has been made during the last few years under the wise guidance of diverse American leaders, there is still a basic wistful nostalgia in the American soul for the good old days of isolation and self-sufficiency. The foot is not sure, the heart is not whole: the giant is still in process of awakening.

The third feeling is one of wonder. When the giant has awakened and opened his eyes, when he has taken heart and joyfully accepted his allotted task, what will he do? How will he lead? What word will he utter? What will the world look like with America really, seriously, irretrievably in it? President Truman has recently said: "I have the feeling that God has created us and brought us to our present position of power and strength for some great purpose. It is not given to us now to know fully what that purpose is." That the day when that purpose will be revealed is coming there can be no doubt whatsoever. It has already dawned, but its fulness is still a matter of the future. Whether it takes one year, or five years, or fifty years, America will one day gather up herself in order to utter her word. All that is happening today, all that has happened for years, is sheer preparation. That is why the moment is one of absolute expectancy. One therefore wonders, when the hour comes, what will the authentic American utterance be?

If these, then, are the three general feelings of the sympathetic foreigner, he is led at once to formulate three general

Mr. Malik is Minister of Lebanon to the United States, and his country's delegate to the United Nations. His paper was prepared for a symposium on man's loyalties under the auspices of the State University of New York.

hopes. America's tremendous industrial and inventive capacity is today one of the main pillars of peace. There would be war tomorrow, there would have been war long ago, were it not for the devastating potential of this capacity. May it long continue therefore as the shield of justice, freedom, and peace.

American science and technology are among the greatest achievements of history. For the mind to penetrate and understand the secrets of nature, and to realize such superb mastery over her forces, is indeed one of the glories of man. This understanding and mastery is good in itself and can never, in and by itself, lead to any evil result. In it man realizes one of his greatest possibilities. To dream in moments of fatigue of an idyllic Rousseauesque return to a simpler state of nature where science and technology do not dominate the scene is absolutely idle. Science and technology will never leave us: the only point is how to humanize and spiritualize them.

To advert to the domain of medicine alone, American science has already proved itself one of the greatest benefactors of mankind. It seems now that the science of medicine will one day conquer everything, except of course death itself, the ultimate limitation of man.

Thus the negative, preventive, defensive function of technology is only an incident in the many good uses to which America's science and industry may be put. It is of the utmost importance that the energies of American science be not all diverted today to the service of defense, but that pure research in every field be carried on for its own sake and in the interests of human welfare and of the arts of peace.

The absolutely prior needs of defense are today overshadowing America's ability to help Chinese, Indians, Arabs, Africans, and Latin Americans exploit their own natural resources for the liberation and elevation of their estate. It is therefore further hoped that in the desperate emergency of the moment this positive, long-range possibility of American capital and technique be not submerged. An infinite good for the undeveloped peoples, for the cause of peace, and indeed for America herself, is waiting just around the corner to be recognized and taken hold of. Only four things are needful: real imaginative vision in the conception; much greater boldness in the execution; real willingness to share not only the machine but the theoretical and technical secret which is creative of the machine, as well as the cultural-scientific presuppositions of this secret; and a realization that after you have conquered poverty, misery, disease, and starvation, whether in Asia, Europe, or America, men may still hate and fight one another even more ferociously than before, and the lower may still rise up and revolt against the higher in sheer spite and nihilism, so that unless you have a mighty moral and spiritual message, side by side with your technological gospel, a message that will penetrate the heart and modulate the will because it is based on the truth of man in his relationship to himself, to his fellow-men, and to God, the end of your technologically developed world, in which there is no poverty, no disease, and no starvation, may be far worse than its beginning.

The second hope is the child of the second general feeling. The giant is dazed and uncertain. He is still rubbing his eyes. What he immediately sees is perhaps too much for him. He has not only not taken it all in: he has not yet sufficiently realized what a tremendous giant he is; he has not yet felt all his powers. Therefore, there is a fear—humanly and naturally speaking—that when he does see all his possibilities, when he does feel his powers, the thing may go to his head; he may then think that nothing can stop him. My deepest hope is that such a calamity never befall our giant. For all his infinite powers, surely truth, righteousness, love, and our ordinary humanity can stop him. If friends from within and from without, who are

moved by the deepest concern for all that is holy and true, never cease to remind our giant, not indeed by the brandishing of force—for who can use force with a giant?—but by patient persuasion and suffering love, that it is written, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," then surely the giant will listen and respond. For the hopeful aspect of this hope is that, whatever other giants have done or are doing, America has not rebelled against the holy tradition which teaches that only the meek shall inherit the earth.

The third hope of course pertains to the contents of the American word. In elaborating a message, in articulating the word, there are two radically different methods of approach. There is first the method of the least common denominator. Here one endeavors to strike a balance that will please everybody and therefore challenge nobody. According to this method, the American message is that which is common to every shade of opinion throughout the land, that which makes everybody feel perfectly at home. The majority of writers today who concern themselves with this question follow this alluring path. They are most careful to formulate a proposition that will please and include everybody: that will not at least leave the writer himself out. That is how people come by the so-called doctrine of democracy as America's message: namely, the ultimacy of freedom, the respect for the individual and his rights, equality of opportunity, and representative government.

Now surely the American democratic ideal whereby everybody is somehow included is a great thing. There is in it a certain essential fairness which is one of the fundamental glories of the American spirit. The individual human person, merely by possessing the natural spark of freedom whereby his mind can discriminate between truth and error, and his conscience between right and wrong, is viewed as worthy of respect in his own right; and every time I read the American Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution, and especially the Bill of Rights, I marvel at the sureness and simplicity of grasp with which the fathers of this great Republic conceived and expressed those great truths.

But surely all this is but a framework within which freedom is meant to flower; and therefore one hopes that when America shall utter her word it shall be a word, not only of happy political arrangements, but of life and truth. The American political ideal cannot be an end in itself; people canot go on simply enjoying freedom of speech, freedom of enterprise, equality of opportunity, and the secret ballot—and nothing else. All this is necessary; but its worth ultimately is measured by the depth and truth and quality of that which it produces. Political systems vary, but the need of man for truth and salvation will never cease. One therefore must press beyond politics, beyond the sheer framework of freedom, beyond the least common denominator which makes everybody feel comfortable and happy; one, I say, must press beyond these things into the domain of qualitative excellence, where, far from pleasing everybody, one may find one's self standing absolutely alone.

The other method of approach to the American word, the word whereby America can live and overflow with life to the whole world, is to search for that which is deep and challenging, even if the searcher is thereby left completely out. For what shall it advantage him, or America, or the world, if, in order to get himself in, in order to feel that he belongs, all he succeeds in conceiving is a thin, external, formal inclusiveness, which enables him to use the pronoun "we" all right, but which leaves out the deepest, the most distinctive attainments of American existence? It were far better to point to the truth in dreadful loneliness from without than to imagine one's self embracing her when in reality one is all the time hugging pitiable husks of

abstraction. For the truth always has compassion on the faithful outsider, and in her own inscrutable way will surely include him.

It is therefore obvious that the American meaning, what America is in herself and what therefore she should not be ashamed of before the whole world, must contain that which is deepest in the American tradition. But it is not an easy matter to search for, discover, and be sure of "the deepest." By its very nature it is hidden and rare. It is not blazed on every street corner. It will not comfortably include everybody. In finding it, one must be exceedingly discriminating: one must already be in possession of a standard of judgment. How can one be sure that one's standard of judgment is right? Obviously one cannot be sure in the sense of a mechanical, external demonstration. One's certainty in these matters is entirely a matter of personal decision for which one takes complete responsibility. In finding the deepest, one reveals what he really most deeply cares for. But when one realizes that he is in good company so far as some of the decisive personalities in history are concerned, including those who made American history, one is not ashamed of revealing "his deepest" either.

There is an essential kindness, purity, and trust in the American character. Surely this is part of the American depth. One hopes that this initial childlike innocence, which is one of the most beautiful things in this country, will not be outgrown as America plunges more and more into the world. For the world with which America will have to contend is very old and "experienced"; in its own wisdom it may outwit and outmaneuver America. The fear is that, in order to hold her own, America may then try to catch the ways of the world. But no matter how many attempts may be made ruthlessly to take advantage of you, I hope you will never shed off your kindness. I hope no degree of disgust or trial or disappointment or disillusionment will cause you to turn your trust into cynicism and despair. We are all members one of another, and no matter how much we may try one another, surely goodness, patience, and trust—whether or not deserved—will prove exceedingly rewarding in the end.

In reaching out beyond one's self, the problem of interference becomes paramount. How much interference and what sort of interference in the affairs of others must this country allow in the formulation of her message to the rest of the world? Both by experience and by temperament, America is not given to interference. The order of freedom which is of your essence requires that you respect the freedom of others. Consequently, I find a general horror of all interference.

But surely it is not a question of a rigid choice between crude interference and complete unconcern. The region between these two extremes, which may be termed the region of active, creative interest, is full of untried possibilities. You cannot, in the name of abstract respect for freedom, remain indifferent to tyranny, injustice, falsehood, the gospel of hatred, and the negation of all your supreme values. Such indifference may mean either that you do not really believe in your values, that you believe that they are relative to you only, or that you simply do not care. But it can be shown that any of these alternatives is big with the most terrible political and spiritual consequences. Therefore your problem must be to determine the proper modality of interference.

Certainly it belongs to America's tradition to discuss and argue and try to persuade, and therefore certain vigorous climates of challenge and persuasion must be created whereby people can awaken to their shameful plight and do something about it.

But there are certain cases of darkness and closedness where bolder schemes must be attempted. If America really believes in freedom of thought and conscience, in the importance of

man, in the supremacy of truth and love, then she canot leave unrebuked and unchallenged certain situations with which she maintains so-called "friendly relations" but where these things are systematically and perennially denied.

Although when the American word comes to utterance, active, creative persuasion and rebuke must become official, yet today nongovernmental agencies are perhaps peculiarly suited to perform this function. This country is blessed with a most impressive array of such institutions: religious, educational, literary, business, philanthropic, artistic. In their dealings with the outside world, these unofficial ventures have been among the greatest and most valiant emissaries of good will that any country has sent forth; and have in some cases potently stirred and fermented and transformed otherwise perfectly hopeless situations.

The American message has been forming itself on this continent for three hundred years. Its spiritual, moral, and intellectual roots all go back, however, to the Old World. Surely therefore the European heritage is part of the depth of the American word. Although you declared your independence of Europe politically, you never broke away from Europe spiritually and intellectually. I must add the Mediterranean world and the Near East to this spiritual depth of yours, for it is from them that you received some of your supremest values. But, even politically, it is clear that the age of independence of Europe is now past and that we live in an age of essential interdependence, essential partnership. In a very real sense the Declaration of Independence is now superseded by a declaration of interdependence.

You have explored and integrated this vast space; there remains for you now to explore and integrate the last four thousand years which constitute your temporal and spiritual dimension. The broad integration of space and matter must now be supplemented by the deep integration of time and spirit. Whatever therefore the character of the final American word, surely it must be such that Plato, Aristotle, Paul, Zeno, Augustine, Averroes, Aquinas, Leibniz, Pascal, and Shakespeare can more or less find themselves in it.

He who penetrates the depths must sooner or later discover that the most impressive thing in America is her Christianity. The good in this country would never have come into being without the blessing and power of Jesus Christ. Despite every external appearance of materialism and secularism, this is a profoundly religious land. Whoever tries to conceive the American word without taking full account of the suffering and love and salvation of Christ is only dreaming. I know how embarrassing this matter is to politicians, bureaucrats, businessman, and cynics; but, whatever these men think, the irrefutable truth is that the soul of America is, at its best and highest, Christian. When the tears and joy of Christ come to perfect fruition in this land, then America will utter her word.

When a people or a culture becomes conscious that it bears a message, it must sooner or later proceed to articulate it. For "no man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light." Now the process of articulation is primarily intellectual, for we fundamentally understand each other by reason and argument. In constructing her word, America must resort to rational elaboration much more than she has cared to do so far. This is the responsibility of the great universities in refining and enlarging the American mind. Nor is reason only a vehicle for transmitting ideas arrived at in other ways; reason is at once means of conveyance and method of discovery. Just as the candle not only lights our way, but confers color and beauty upon the objects we behold, so reason discovers, constitutes, and transmits ideas. The urgent

need is for a fundamental set of ideas, rationally defensible and universally valid. America will find it difficult to rise to this requirement to the extent to which subjectivism, relativism, romanticism, Freudianism, and self-separation from the positive tradition dominate her intellectual life.

But when the American universities regain for the mind its rightful authority, so that their graduates can methodically argue for hours, in absolute peace and joy, and without fatigue, not only concerning simple, immediate, practical problems, but also concerning the deepest issues of life and death and destiny, and when in this restful argument they make use of principles and horizons of thought drawn from the deepest attainments of the last four thousand years, then I believe a new day will dawn, not only upon America, but upon the whole world.

I come from a country and a people who have known more history than any other people. I tell you the excitement of time is important only if measured on the peace of eternity. What matters in the end is that which abides, that which remains immovable when everything else moves, even if it should be moved by it. And this is none other than the eternal spirit of truth and love, reaching for man, claiming and forgiving him, and sealing him with the seal of its adoption. For I tell you man will die unless, remembering his origin, awakening to his plight, he is constantly replenished, amidst tears of joy, by celestial food. It is possible for America to mediate the word of truth; it is possible for you to give this food to yourselves and your children, and to an incredibly hungry world. For the eternal is live and resplendent, though perhaps somewhat hidden, in your midst; and the roots of your tradition already draw their sustenance from the gathering of the ages.

When I think of what your churches and universities can do, by way of mediating love and forgiveness, imparting self-restraint, training the mind, revealing the truth; when I observe what your industries can accomplish, by way of transforming this whole material universe into an instrument which will lighten the burden of man; when I ponder what your God-fearing homes and small communities can create, by way of character and solidity and stability and humor; and when I reflect on the great media of the newspaper, the cinema, the radio and television, and how they can immensely help in the articulation of the American word; when I humbly and concretely think on these things, and when I further meditate that there is nothing to prevent all these agencies from dedicating themselves to truth and love and being; then, I say, perhaps the day of the Lord is at hand.

READING AND WRITING ON HUMAN VALUES

Ralph M. Sargent and Wayne C. Booth

EFFECTIVE writing cannot be taught to apathetic students in an intellectual vacuum. If the student is to write effectively, he must have something to say, and his desire to communicate must be strong enough to carry him through the hours of hard work that good writing requires. Everyone concedes that the study of great works of literature is one of the aims of liberal education, since such works both embody and contain significant value-judgments made by men who have faced squarely the most important human problems. But what is sometimes overlooked is that they provide an excellent basis for student writing. They provide, whether "raided" for provocative passages and ideas or studied fully as complete expressions, both substance and example for student writing.

In a new course at Haverford College carefully selected books, chiefly in the humanities, are read as a basis for discussion and writing about the problems and values contained in or exemplified by them. As the student attempts to express himself effectively on the ideas communicated to him or aroused in him, he is given the help he needs in solving his own problems of thinking and writing. At weekly tutorial meetings, his papers are read aloud and criticized by two other students and the instructor. Thus his reading, thinking, and discussion are combined to create the greatest possible substance and motivation for thoughtful and effective writing.

Mr. Sargent is Professor and Chairman of the Department of English, and Mr. Booth is Assistant Professor of English, in Haverford College.

I

Most freshmen come to college having disliked the writing assignments they had in secondary school. Many are prepared to go on disliking writing. At the start of their college careers they are still faced with the same difficulties in writing that they have always faced: they have, or think that they have, little or nothing to say. "I've written my autobiography so many times now, for one teacher or another, I could recite it backwards," one student explained last fall. As teachers of composition we are faced each year with a new crop of such students, bright but empty-minded, eager for "an education," for mature experience, but hostile or apathetic toward "English." And our job is to give them the desire to write well!

For most of us, the methods of the traditional course have become less and less satisfactory. Teachers have naturally considered composition teaching a necessary, but brutal, initiatory rite to be performed before being allowed to teach literature or a punishment for not having published scholarly articles. And administrators have played the game by paying composition teachers less than other teachers, by giving them fewer promotions, and by requiring of them more hours of work.

Efforts to escape from such conditions by revising the composition course have had only limited success. Perhaps the most interesting have been in the direction of replacing the unprincipled and convention-ridden treatment of logic, rhetoric, and dialectic with organized philosophical treatment of those matters.

Such an attack at least has the virtue of being intellectually respectable; the interested student can learn important things about writing from teachers who have really thought long and hard about the genuine principles, as distinct from the handbook rules, of good writing. But the problem of motivation is not solved by such a program; regardless of our desires, we must admit that the average student has no interest whatever in writing rhetorical analyses. Yet the opposite reform, in trying to remove this difficulty by stimulating "student interest," falls into other even greater troubles, not the least of which is that nobody learns anything worth learning. For example, many courses in "Communications" have done little more than graft onto the old methods what in effect amounts to a chance to speak over a telephone or microphone. Whatever interest the student may display in the contrived arrangements, he is going to recognize in the long run that nothing important is being said and done. Unless the instructor is more successful in stimulating genuine thought than most teachers, unaided by the great writers, can ever hope to be, he will always be reduced, when the time to assign topics comes each week, to suggestions not far from "My Day in the Country" or "How To Bake a Cake." Topics of this kind may arouse individual students who have those "interests" to the point of working hard on an essay and may provide a suitable framework for the instructor's invaluable comments on grammar, punctuation, and organization. To that extent, the student may even learn more about the mechanics of writing than his harried fellow in the older kind of course who was told to "describe a process" or "write a comparison or contrast." But such topics will not contribute much to his ability to write about anything important to him or to anyone else.

In short, student interest is not enough by itself, any more than a formal consideration of rhetorical "topics" is enough by itself. What must be found is a method of creating genuine interest in subject matters that will in themselves have some real and recognizable value in the general education of the student. If those of us who teach composition try to remember how we "learned to write," we discover that real learning took place on those rare occasions when we became engrossed in a new and important idea which required for its expression skills hitherto undeveloped. Although we may have learned mechanical rules of organization and grammar in dry runs, we did so uneconomically. Whatever we learned of real clarity and grace did not come from being told how to write an introduction or a conclusion or how to use transitions. Being told about these things or observing them on one's own is a necessary part of learning how to write, but first must come an interest in saying something well to a reader who is interested in reading what you have to say.

This being true, then clearly a background for any writing course is a full college program of general education which leads the student into a careful consideration of a constant stream of new ideas or a reconsideration of the ideas he already holds. If the composition course is surrounded by exciting courses in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities, the quality of the writing will tend to improve, regardless of what is done by the English staff. But this does not mean that even in an ideal college the composition teachers can afford to concentrate completely on rhetorical problems, relying on the other courses for the student's general mental growth. As soon as they do, the student will quite rightly decide that the writing course is less important than his other courses.

The situation is worse, of course, in colleges where specialization begins early or where a free elective system allows some students to dodge every liberal course but English composition. If freshman English is the only "liberal" course taken by the physics major or the

sociology major, it is important that it should "liberate" rather than merely exasperate. In short, the best composition course in any college will try to teach the student how to read, think, and write about the problems and values that are crucial to his general education. It must not begin with, or rest satisfied in, a "mastery" of grammar, rhetoric, and style, though this is one of its main ends. To borrow a distinction used by Norman Foerster, we cannot teach students simply how to write *writing;* we must teach them how to write *something,* and that something must be important.

II

The Haverford course is designed to meet this need directly by combining the teaching of composition with the careful reading of complete works and discussion of the problems and values embodied in them. For this purpose, works have been selected in six "areas of concern," the principles of selection being general excellence and relevance to the problems and values proper to each area. In each area, two major works are read: one contemporary, calculated to present material and issues directly within the student's milieu; the other from some older period, intended to present similar problems within the historical setting of Western civilization. So far as possible, works of fiction or biography are chosen, in order to present problems and values in concrete lives rather than in theoretical form.[1] Ideally, each area and text and each topic for discussion or writing should in some way mediate between interests already held by the student and interests or capacities for judgment which the staff desires to stimulate. The areas of concern are, by definition, opportunities for the exercise of judgment about matters of importance to everyone and to society. They are thus designed to appeal to the student's interests, but not to those interests as limited by his own experience. For example, the student is interested in living well, in finding happiness. But the course does not ask him simply to think and write about his present limited ideas of how to live well or be happy. Rather it presents him with two examples of "total choices" of ways of life and leads him to compare the values incorporated in the lives of St. Francis and Albert Schweitzer with his own limited, tradition-bound values. Remote as two such figures are from most students' experience, they constitute, when presented properly, a powerful challenge to the limitations in that experience. Inevitably, the four papers which each student writes in the course of discussing such matters are more vital than those which could result from one month's discussion of rhetorical problems and a reliance, for subject matter, on the carry-over from the student's life or from his secondary-school reading.[2]

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[1] It should be obvious that, provided the basic principles of the course are adhered to, a fairly wide variety of areas and titles could serve the ends of the course. It is important, however, that there should be at least some sense of sequence from area to area and a multiplicity of relationships between titles within an area. It is perhaps better if, as in the following list, there is no attempt at making the areas exhaustive or mutually exclusive; at this level it is probably a mistake to suggest that any simple category can comprehend the richness of any great work. The areas and titles as used this year are as follows: (1) "The Personal Career": Lewis' *Arrowsmith* and Plutarch's *Pericles;* (2) "Social Action and Goals": Lilienthal's *TVA: Democracy on the March* and More's *Utopia;* (3) "The Good Life": Schweitzer's *Out of My Life and Thought* and Chesterton's *St. Francis of Assisi;* (4) "Psychological Drives and the Dream": Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest;* (5) "The Tragic and the Comic": Malraux's *Man's Fate,* Jonson's *Volpone,* Congreve's *The Way of the World,* and Thurber's *My Life and Hard Times;* (6) "Enjoyment and Stimulus of the Beautiful": Whitman's "Song of Myself" and Blake's *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience.*

[2] Although the titles suggested by each instructor vary considerably, many of them springing spontaneously from class discussions, the following topics, selected from a longer list given over the four weeks spent on this area, is fairly representative of the range and type sug-

To describe in detail the procedure in each of the six "areas of concern" would be impossible here, although a full idea of the way in which the complexity of ideas and opportunities for valid comparison increase from area to area could be obtained only from such a summary. Since we use whole works which in themselves are approachable from innumerable points of view, the framework provides ample materials to allow for variation from instructor to instructor without any essential departure from the "values" approach. Some instructors spend more time than others on close analysis of shorter passages or on considerations of literary quality. Others spend more time on rhetorical analysis of the students' papers. For example, in the first area, "The Personal Career," some instructors considered in detail the comparable values and problems of biography and fiction or the difficulties in the way of translating from fiction into real life; others concentrated almost exclusively on the problems of evaluating "success" or "failure" in personal careers, using the two readings, *Arrowsmith* and *Pericles,* as equivalent material. But the basic motivational framework of the course is essentially unaffected by these variations.

As a result of this multiple assault on the problem of motivation—*readings* chosen to introduce important issues and judgments for *discussion* leading to *writing,* which, in turn, leads to further discussion of the issues and rigorous criticism of the papers in small groups—student and staff morale was higher throughout the year than any of the staff would have believed possible in a composition course. The course seemed to accelerate in interest throughout the year. The kind and complexity of the readings changed, the subjects for discussion changed, and, although a great part of the time in most tutorials was still spent on problems of writing, the problems were not "How should one write?" but always "How could this paper be revised in order to cope more adequately with the task the writer has set himself?" Once the students come to think, "How can I say better what I want to say?" rather than "How can I improve my writing?" or, worst of all, "How can I improve my grade?" the battle—and it still frequently is a battle—is largely won.

III

Important as the other features are, the heart of the plan is the tutorial. Besides the challenge of the ideas themselves, the strongest incentive to write well is the fact that each student is writing not only to his instructor but also to two of his fellow-students. In groups of three, the students meet once a week with the instructor for a one-hour session in which one or two of the papers written that week are read aloud and criticized. Thus, as the student writes his paper, he knows that he will be criticized not only according to the Olympian and frequent-

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gested. It will be noted that some are "too difficult," some too simple-minded, some too abstract. But in every class there are some students who do well only when the subject is "too difficult," some who do best with extremely simple topics, and some who are most stimulated by the chance to deal with abstractions. It is also important that, when these assignments are made, they are accompanied with some kind of initial discussion of the possibilities and dangers inherent in them, and the student always has the alternative of writing on some other aspect of the works which interests him more. (1) Write a character study of St. Francis. (2) Compare St. Francis and Schweitzer in any way you think really justified by genuine similarities or differences. (3) Write an imaginary dialogue between St. Francis and Schweitzer. (4) Discuss St. Francis' attitude toward (*a*) nature, (*b*) human nature, or (*c*) poverty, evaluating the importance of what he has to say to the modern world. (5) Show how Schweitzer's philosophy of reverence for life relates to his investigations into the historical Jesus. (6) Recount in your own words the philosophy of reverence for life, trying to maintain the same relationship and proportion of details to the whole as in the original. (7) Construct for yourself a possible service analogous to Schweitzer's jungle mission —some self-sacrificing service genuinely possible for you—and argue for or against undertaking such a mission.

ly incomprehensible standards of the instructor but also according to the standards of his contemporaries. And after the experience of one or two tutorials, he knows that he is expected to be able to defend what he writes on some other level than simply saying, "Well, that's how it felt to me."

Differences among instructors in the methods of conducting these tutorials have had no apparent effect on student enthusiasm for them. Some of us have found it best to appoint one official "critic" to read one paper in advance of the tutorial and prepare a criticism of it. This has, of course, the advantage of producing better criticism than is possible on one hearing, but the instructor has to take pains, especially at the beginning of the year, to prevent the third man from feeling irresponsible and letting the tutorial lie in the laps of the other two men. Other instructors have preferred to conduct the tutorial entirely spontaneously. Students learn not only how to discuss responsibly on their own, though that alone would be valuable enough. They also learn to compete intelligently, not so much for grades—although, as long as there is a grade system, there will be grade-hounds—but more for the approval of their classmates. Most important, the experience of reading their own work aloud to a critical audience teaches them that the genuine principles of composition are comprehensible in terms of means and ends, and they learn to distinguish those principles from the mere conventions. In place of the typical composition experience, which is that of writing for the instructor and accepting or rejecting his judgments, without ever understanding them except in rare personal conferences, the student tries to say something to his classmates and then discovers whether or not they have understood and approved.

The quality of the interchanges that grow out of this basic situation can best be seen in a few selections from transcripts of wire-recordings. After the reading of the paper, most of the tutorials begin with some kind of discussion of the paper as a writing job.

CRITIC A: Well, to begin with, I don't think his opening sentence is worded the best way it could be. I mean, to get the best effect for a good opening sentence. It starts out by saying that "Shakespeare introduces a character named Caliban who is supposed to be an illegitimate son of the devil"—well, I think he could leave out a *lot* of the "supposed to be's" that he has, because it is actual fact; he *is* an illegitimate son of a devil. . . .

AUTHOR: Well, yeah, I guess you are right. Well, you see, he never. . . . Well, in fact I guess Shakespeare *does* have him as an illegitimate son of the devil but. . . .

CRITIC A: Well, to get back: I think if you re-word that opening sentence a bit to something like: "An illegitimate son of the devil, called Caliban, is introduced by Shakespeare in his comedy, *The Tempest,*" or something of that nature would be better than opening with that particular prepositional phrase.

INSTRUCTOR (*to author*): Do you agree?

AUTHOR: No, I always like to have the name and then. . . .

CRITIC B: If you're writing on Caliban, it seems to me that Caliban should be the one to be introduced first.

AUTHOR: You might have something there, but to a person. . . .

The value of such intimate and detailed interchanges in enlivening the treatment of style and organization can hardly be overestimated. Students who might remain quite unmoved by an instructor's criticisms are forced to reform their ways or suffer the disapproval of their fellows. Student critics are less tolerant than the instructor about recidivism: "You made exactly this same mistake in your last paper!" Although there are some students who will, at first, ape what they take to be the model English teacher by objecting to every error, serious or trivial, with equal zest, criticisms tend eventually to center on genuine problems of successful communication rather than on mechanical details. For

example, the above discussion went on for a long while before the opening sentence was settled upon, and the instructor was several times tempted to decide the issue on his own and get on to "more important" matters. But, although the criticism began trivially, all three men were really engrossed in the problem of how to open that paragraph, with copies of the paper before them. This led them into a much better discussion of the value of the whole first paragraph, which again went on "too long" but led to a discussion of the two main sections of the paper in relation to the two parts of the concluding paragraph. This discussion, in turn, took "too long" but led all three men to eventual agreement about the basic difficulty of the whole paper.

Indeed, one of the most valuable things the instructor learns is that his idea of what is a valuable discussion point is frequently very different from the students' idea—and the instructor is not always right! Frequently, points which to the instructor seem perfectly clear and perfectly useless as a basis for discussion will, after preliminary sparring, turn up real problems of misunderstanding which demonstrate as no teacher's comment ever could how hard it is to achieve real clarity.

CRITIC A: I don't see why he couldn't say that it was at this point that the play opens. . . .

AUTHOR: No, I meant that. . . .

CRITIC A: . . . because it was here that. . . .

AUTHOR (*interrupting again*): No, I meant, you see . . . even during the storm he was in this—well—this status in regard to Prospero—his slave—his whole attitude toward Prospero and Prospero's attitude toward him is *at* this very point. . . .

INSTRUCTOR: Did that idea come over to you?

CRITIC A: No, I didn't get that. . . . As a matter of fact, I thought I'd understood it and that he was saying. . . .

AUTHOR: Well, if I'd changed it around like *this*, would you have got it?

The students soon become critical of their own work and learn to do what every teacher is always hoping they will learn to do: they make an effort to forestall adverse criticism by careful rewriting. Occasionally in a tutorial a student will continue the rewriting done at home, stopping in the middle of reading his paper to criticize it himself: "What a sentence!" "Did *I* write that?" "Oh, this stuff really belongs in the last paragraph."

That all this is not confined to problems of expression and organization alone is only to be expected. Since the whole emphasis of the course is on saying something important, the tutorials tend to become proving grounds for discussion of books and ideas in class sessions. Thus most tutorials come to grips sooner or later with the ideas expressed in the papers. Once the adequacy of the expression to the idea has been roughly settled, the discussion naturally turns to the idea in its own right. Sometimes this is merely an attempt to settle what the book says, a pursuit that is, of course, encouraged, since the ability to read with accuracy and sensitivity is one of the main goals of the course.

CRITIC B: You can see at the beginning that he [Prospero] is plotting for revenge, and at the end he's changed his mind. And there are speeches that *show* this . . . (*pause*).

AUTHOR: Well, what *are* they, and *what* do they show?

[*All three students and instructor open text and search*]

CRITIC B: Well, I can't find one showing the ways in which he's changed. . . .

AUTHOR: Well, here's one, on page 76. . . .

CRITIC B: Yes, and then he says, to Sebastian and Antonio, "But you. . . ."

Frequently the discussion will move from the book itself to a comparison of the idea of the paper with the book or a discussion of the idea by itself. For example, the tutorial from which the above transcriptions were made went on during the last half-hour first to the problem of good and evil as exemplified in the character of Caliban:

AUTHOR: He doesn't really know the difference between good and evil, and in that

sense is innocent, or naïve, like in the Garden of Eden.

CRITIC B: Well, *I* think he knows the difference between good and evil, to some extent, as is shown by. . . .

Then it proceeded to a general discussion of why Caliban appeals to readers and spectators ("Well, I think there is something a little like Caliban in just about everybody, and we feel sorry to see him punished for it"), and ended with a brief, shallow, but animated discussion of the whole problem of man's moral nature.

Occasionally these discussions of general ideas will take a strongly personal slant of the kind practically impossible in a full class. In one session, for example, discussing a paper written after reading Schweitzer's *Out of My Life and Thought*, one student who had been relatively apathetic throughout the year suddenly came to life.

CRITIC C: But what do *you* think of this young man, this twenty-one-year-old [a young man who had been shown in dialogue with his father over the problem of self-sacrificial service]? What do you think his life is going to be like? For instance—say—he does work for the Friends Service Committee, or something like that.

CRITIC D: Well, he's not going to be St. Francis, for sure.

AUTHOR: Well, I consider working for Friends Service far different from going out and just living like a poor man, the way my hero does. He wouldn't really get down and live with the people. . . .

CRITIC C: Yes, he wouldn't really live without money at all. But was that what your young man had in mind? You don't make that very clear.

CRITIC D: I think you didn't have any good ideas about that.

AUTHOR: You know, I hadn't noticed—it's just brought up the point to me. No, I didn't. I thought that when I said that he was going to work among the poor that it would be clear at that point, but it's not. . . .

CRITIC D (*interrupting*): Could I ask again about this person? Suppose he doesn't renounce all property, but just decided that he has no desire to acquire wealth, no desire to get involved in the business world, the hand-over-fist, and lives in the conditions that I said before? Does anybody have any answer—any ideas on this? What his life will be like?

AUTHOR: I personally think—I would say that he would stick it out about a year, and then come back to his father. . . .

CRITIC D: That's what I would think would happen, too.

AUTHOR: I don't think any person twenty-one would do that sort of thing. I don't think they're ready for it. The emotional strain would be too great. . . .

CRITIC C: Well, this is quite specific, because it's what I'm going to do.

Immediately the discussion became personal, with student C explaining his plan—which has since been carried out—to drop school and go to Mexico to do relief work. The other two students pressed him very closely about his motives, and he in turn pressed them very closely about their complacency, with the result that all three men were forced during the hour to deal directly with basic problems of their own lives.

Of course, there will always be an increase in the intellectual level of student discussions, in and out of class, whenever great numbers of the students—in this case, all the freshmen—are reading the same books at the same time. But with the tutorial system this general stimulus is heightened immeasurably. Such statements as "We were talking it over last night in the dorm"—normally a rare comment in any course and perhaps especially rare in a composition course—became frequent. Since every student gets in on at least one good discussion about the current book or a paper on that book every week, it is inevitable that other discussions should spring up spontaneously on the campus. Bull sessions that really come to grips with problems are, most people would probably agree, more important than classes in forming the mental habits of college students. Once the tradition of such sessions becomes well established at a school, it perpetuates itself. But the problem is always

how to get more than a handful of intellectual rebels to become interested in pursuing ideas on their own, since at most colleges the forces outside the classroom work in the opposite direction. The tutorial sessions, in opposing such forces by establishing habits of disinterested, intimate discussion, can do what even the best discussion techniques in the classroom cannot do.

IV

Although any of the three features of the course could be adopted with profit in almost any composition program, certainly the tutorial system is the most valuable innovation. But the objection is likely to be made that all colleges cannot afford to double the budget for the composition course, or that no composition staff, already overworked, is going to jump at the chance to spend an additional seven hours each week for every section of twenty-one students, unless there is a corresponding adjustment in the whole teaching load.

After teaching for one year with the tutorial system, one is tempted to answer such an objection head-on: Until colleges and universities are willing to pay for an important service, they will continue to have that service performed poorly, by tired, angry, or indifferent teachers. But, since there is little hope that composition teachers will in the very near future be given professional status and pay for doing a job which everyone seems to consider an indispensable one, it would be futile to argue, at present, for a change of 50 per cent in the student load. Administrators will probably go on treating the composition course as the overgrown orphan-child of the college until the teachers themselves can demonstrate not only the indispensability of their services —that is already assumed—but the fundamental importance of those services to every program of general education. Without more money and without overburdening the teachers beyond their present almost intolerable load, what can be done in the normal composition program to incorporate the values of the tutorial system?

In many departments the composition teachers are expected to meet each student in private conference for about twenty minutes at least once every two weeks. If three of these conferences were combined into one hour-long tutorial, at least some of the value of the tutorial system would be obtained. Where staffs are overloaded so that this is impossible, slightly larger groups might be used; we have found that to have four students in a tutorial does not diminish greatly its effectiveness, although more than five or six would probably destroy the advantages. Where even this seems impossible, the values of the tutorial are, we feel, important enough to justify cutting—perhaps drastically—the amount of class time in order to provide tutorial time. If instructors could meet a class once a week as a whole, they could then use the time formerly taken in preparation and execution of the two remaining sessions in extemporaneous tutorials. Since papers read in tutorials require less time to grade, the total hours of work need be no more than in the normal program.

To incorporate the other features of the course would offer no practical difficulty at all. Reading an assortment of good books in their entirety is inherently a more valuable educational experience than reading the lists of short essays or excerpts from essays which fill the conventional composition "textbook." Although most of the instructors have found it desirable to supplement the readings with an occasional essay, used as a model for rhetorical analysis, they have found, on the whole, that the students respond more actively to complete works. Similarly, the concentration on predetermined sets of problems and value-judgments would benefit any course. Although to a certain extent it is wise to let the books determine the discussion that springs from them, it is immeasurably helpful to choose books in

advance which will automatically raise problems and suggest comparisons which one believes to be worth the student's time. Only by such planning in advance can a staff make sure that there will be a genuinely cumulative effect throughout the year, so that the discussions and papers at the end will be richer than those at the beginning.

Although it is certainly too early to evaluate objectively the success of this course in teaching students how to write well or read perceptively and although there may never be any objective measure of improvement in the students' ability to make informed and responsible judgments in the various areas of concern, there can be no doubt that simply in the matter of staff and student morale the course is a success. Student interest in good literature has been far livelier than before. The course has been a pleasure for the staff and, in so far as hard work is ever pleasant to students as a whole, to the students as well.

In one sense, this method of combining vital reading and writing is not new at all. It is the method employed by admired writers of the past, before mass-produced education, including such figures as Franklin and Lincoln. Tutorial instruction is no innovation. It is certain, however, that reading, discussion, and writing devoted to great works of literature can restore the values of the humanities and the art of writing to their rightful position—at the very center of liberal education.

LOGIC IN COMPOSITION

Monroe C. Beardsley

I was looking through a recent elementary textbook that, among other things, purports to tell students how to communicate effectively. In this book I found some remarks that exhibit in an unusually artless way some of the problems in teaching composition for which we have not yet found completely satisfactory answers.

According to this book, there are two main rules that a student should observe in his choice of words. First, *be accurate:* "Don't say 'people' if your idea is the people who have a right to vote; say 'electorate.'" Second, *be vivid* (and this example is on the very next page): "If a man is unusually tall, call him a giant." Now when you are talking about people who have a right to vote, it may be accurate, but it is certainly not vivid, to call them an "electorate." And when you are talking about a man who is unusually tall, it may be vivid, but it is certainly not accurate, to call him a "giant." The book does not explain how you can follow both rules at once or how you can decide which rule to apply in a particular case, and a smart student who thinks over this advice is going to be very puzzled by it. It is too much like saying, "Always tell the exact truth, but also exaggerate it entertainingly."

By its casual juxtaposition of these two maxims for the student-writer, the book illustrates quite sharply one of the pitfalls of composition teaching. If the teaching of composition is to be something more than just passing out a sort of intuitive praise or blame for particular attempts at writing, then it must be based on general principles. I say "general principles," not "universal principles"—that would be asking too much at present. In other words, I am thinking of composition as a branch of applied rhetoric, and it seems to me that the hardest problem in trying to work out such a rhetoric is this: Suppose a student brings in an essay that runs like this: "In the months preceding the election, men went to various places at different times and made speeches to a great many people...." We become exasperated with the thinness of his discourse. But we do not want to say simply, "Write it over"; we want to give him some *general* advice, that will serve him on future occasions as well. So we say, "Be accurate! Don't say 'people'; say 'electorate.'" Then we discover that this advice conflicts with some other advice we want to give, like "Be vivid." Shall we say the man is six feet seven and three-sixteenths inches tall, or that he is a giant? We can remove this conflict by qualifying our advice; but when we do this, we often make the advice tautological, like: "Be accurate, unless it is a case where accuracy is undesirable." And then, of course, we are giving no advice at all. We are like the rhetorician Prodicus, who jokingly told Socrates that "he had himself discovered the true rule of art, which was to be neither long nor short, but of a convenient length" (*Phaedrus*).

The problem is to get principles of composition that will be general and fairly definite, without being either contradictory, on the one hand, or truistic, on the other. I think we agree that it would merely evade the problem to say, for

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example, "Be accurate in psychology courses, and be vivid in English courses." The problem must be solved in a different way.

Consider "accuracy" again. Of course, we cannot simply dismiss the book's advice: "accuracy" must come in somewhere in verbal composition. But how does it come in? And what does it mean? Exactly what are we asking the student to do when we advise him to prefer accuracy to inaccuracy?

When we analyze what is involved in the notion of accuracy and ask ourselves what we have to teach our students if we really *want* them to write accurately, I think we come to certain conclusions. First, we find that the word "accuracy" covers several distinct qualities of writing: it may mean "precision" as opposed to "vagueness"; "clearness" as opposed to "obscurity"; "truth" as opposed to "falsity"; or "specificity" as opposed to "generality." Second, we find that each of these qualities of writing has to be achieved in its own special way, so that our students need to understand the distinctions between them. And, third, we find that we have to give the student some method for achieving whichever of the qualities is desirable.

Take "specificity," since this is the particular sort of accuracy that the author of the book seems to have in mind when he recommends talking about the "electorate" rather than about "people." The injunction, "Be accurate" often turns up in the form "Be specific." To be specific in a given context is to talk about a species or subclass of things (*voters*), rather than about a genus or more general class to which the species belongs (*people*). Now, we cannot lay down a general rule like "Always talk about the smallest possible classes of things"—this would lead to the most tedious sort of writing. But we *can* establish a fairly obvious, yet by no means trivial, principle: "In deciding which terms to use, remember that the more general the class you refer to, the more things you are talking about, but the less you are saying about any one thing."

A good many other considerations can be brought in here to complicate matters, but my point is a quite simple one. Whether the student should be more or less specific in a particular essay, one thing is always true: that the student ought to know *how* specific he *is* being. That is, he ought to know the relationships between the various classes of things he is writing about, and which of them are subclasses, or species, of others.

Suppose a student writes: "At college I have taken courses in English, art, economics, social sciences, and humanities." He has not stopped to think which of these classes of courses are species of others, and so his sentence has two serious faults: it is redundant, because English and art courses are species of humanities courses; and it is ambiguous, because it does not make clear whether social science is a special course by itself or a genus that includes economics courses as a species. This student needs to be more familiar with species-genus relationships, so that he thinks in terms of them while he is writing. But this means that he must have some conception of the process of *classification*, within which the terms "species" and "genus" get their significance. In short, if we want to teach the student something about accuracy, in the sense of specificity, we have to teach him a certain portion of *logic*. Actually, this is a fairly elementary part of logic, and it is easy and enjoyable to teach. You make the student a little self-conscious about the *basis of division* he is using when he breaks a class down into subclasses (as in describing the courses he has taken at college). He then constructs a few classifications of his own and learns how to revise them when the categories overlap or leave gaps. An hour or two of this practice will give him the essentials of classification.

I have taken the term "accuracy" as an excuse for giving one example of the way

in which we can make our principles of composition more meaningful, more learnable, and more applicable by connecting them up with principles and distinctions of elementary logic. I must confess that when it comes to "vividness" I cannot draw a parallel conclusion. No doubt the word "vivid" names, in a loose way, an identifiable quality of some discourse, and there are books on composition that make a good deal of this sort of advice: Be vivid! Be concrete! Use images! This question is too tangled to discuss briefly,[1] but I shall make one tentative comment. I am thinking of students who write like this: "Balding, snub-nosed Socrates believed in the immortality of the soul." I guess this is an attempt to follow such advice. Immortality is unavoidably abstract, and perhaps the writer thought he ought to balance the abstractness with a few concrete physiological images. This is the rhetorical analogue of Whitehead's "fallacy of misplaced concreteness." My example suggests that vividness is, at most, a secondary, or derivative, consideration and does not take precedence over logic.

I should like to consider one more point in the book I quoted above. Perhaps it is unfair to offer it exclusively as my Horrible Example, for it is by no means typical of books in the field. But it is a convenient text because, being short and simple, it shows in an extreme form tendencies that are also to be discerned in more sophisticated books. I do not wish to poke fun at anyone for failing to solve a very hard problem that *none* of us has completely solved. Nevertheless, I have to show that there *is* a problem, and a serious one, in order to show why I believe that we can make considerable headway with the problem if we seek help from the materials of elementary logic.

Consider what this book has to say about the organization of an essay or speech. We find the three familiar terms: "unity," "emphasis," and "coherence." Let us see about unity. A student may agree that his essay ought to be more unified, but still be genuinely puzzled about how to unify it. This book offers two "suggestions."

The first suggestion is this: "See to it that everything you write or say on any subject is clearly, even obviously, *related* to the subject." This suggestion is of no help at all. Any two subjects, however ill-suited to be combined in a single context, are related in *some* way. To simplify our discussion, let us stick to *sentence*-unity for a moment. Suppose a student writes, "The machinery on my grandfather's farm, where I used to pick strawberries, was very rusty." Probably we should agree that this sentence is lacking in unity, but that is not because the strawberries have *no* relationship to the rusty machinery. For they have the relationship of having existed at the same time, and they even are related in color, since they are both reddish. These relationships are perhaps not "obvious," but I do not think the author of our textbook expects this word to be taken very seriously.

If I seem bent on splitting hairs, I believe it is merely because I am trying to make my distinction in as few words as possible. Mere *relatedness* has nothing to do with unity. Most of us would, of course, be willing to withdraw the word "related" if we could fall back on the word "relevant." For instance, we might say that the strawberries are irrelevant to the rusty machinery, in the sentence I cited, whereas the subordinate clause *is* relevant in the following sentence: "The machinery on my grandfather's farm, where it used to rain often, was very rusty." I don't offer this as a model of style, but only to take notice of a difference. We can tell the student that his sentence or essay will be unified if each statement it contains is relevant to the other statements, either indirectly or directly. And this is harmless advice. But it

[1] See William K. Wimsatt, Jr., "The Substantive Level," in a forthcoming issue of the *Sewanee Review*.

is also rather empty advice, unless we go on to provide the student with some criteria for deciding when one statement is relevant to another and when it is not.

Now, in my two examples it is easy to be quite exact about the matter. The rain is relevant to the rust in a way in which the strawberries are not: that is, there is a causal connection in one case but not in the other. Causal connection is not the only kind of relevance, but it is one kind; in other cases the unity of a complex sentence or essay may be substantiated in other ways. There is the connection between a premise and a conclusion in a deductive argument, between a generalization and an instance of that generalization, between a hypothesis and a piece of evidence for that hypothesis. These are some of the well-defined types of relevance. And it seems to me that, as soon as we begin talking clearly and helpfully to the student about relevance, we are talking *logic*.

That this is true is even more evident in the book's second suggestion about unity: "See to it that everything which is a minor part of the subject, in its narrowest sense, is subordinated to the subject in a logical relationship which is apparent." At this point in the book the author says he is through discussing "unity" and is about to proceed with "emphasis"; but surely he ought not to stop here. For this advice will not be very helpful to a student who does not have a fairly good idea of what a "logical relationship" is. I should hope my best students, at least, would be dissatisfied to pass over the advice without asking some pretty embarrassing questions. What *are* the logical relationships? And which of them constitutes a subordination, rather than a *co*-ordination, of ideas?

It seems to me that what students need, if they are to have any real understanding of unity and any dependable capacity to see whether their essays are unified or not, is a study of certain fundamental types of logical connection. I do not mean merely acquiring a few technical terms: I mean practice, in and between classes, in learning to recognize the logical connections between statements in a given discourse. They can start by learning to recognize certain structural relations: In a given discourse, which statements are reasons for other statements? Which statements are conclusions from other statements? And which statements are neither reasons nor conclusions? They can study a few uncomplicated examples and make the relationships clear by means of a diagram. Diagramming a discourse is analogous to diagramming a sentence—only *this* diagram marks out the lines of relevance in the discourse. Then they are ready to make further distinctions. For example, which conclusions are deductive conclusions, and which are inductive? And, of the inductive conclusions, which are generalizations and which are hypotheses?

For the purpose of understanding unity, students do not have to become adept at constructing good arguments of various types: a unified discourse is not necessarily a sound one. But most students who write disorganized and incoherent essays or fall into these muddles do so, I believe, because at certain points they have not clearly understood what they were actually doing. They are uncertain whether they are giving a reason for a statement or drawing a consequence from that statement; they have not definitely decided what their examples are supposed to be examples *of*, before they start giving examples; they have not made up their minds in which direction the cause-and-effect relation goes in a particular case; or they are unable to tell with any confidence whether two of their statements are logically contradictory or not.

To get straight about these fundamental notions, the student needs a few weeks of careful and practical study of logic. He needs more than a mere list of logical connections to memorize. And I do not think it serves the purpose to give him a brief review of "fallacies," as

is so often done. Indeed, I am rather surprised that "fallacies" are taught, in the way they usually are, wrapped up in a little bundle by themselves. A fallacy is the violation of some rule of inference that is required to justify arguments of a certain sort; to study fallacies without first getting clear about the rules of inference they violate seems to me to put things backward. The *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* fallacy, for example, consists in a certain type of failure to conform to correct procedure in getting evidence for a causal law, and a student cannot get a very clear idea of what the fallacy is if he has not first become clear about the criteria of correctness.

My discussion of unity, incomplete as it is, has committed me rather decisively to the view that, in order to make it clear and convincing to students that their essays should be unified and in order to show them how to do it, we must teach them some elementary logic. I do not go quite so far as the author of a well-known *Writer's Guide,* who says, quite bluntly, "Unity is a by-product of clear thinking." Probably we would have to adjust this general principle to take account of the contributions that tone and attitude can make to the unity of a discourse. But the "by-product" metaphor is instructive; there is a good deal of truth in it. For if the clauses and sentences and paragraphs of an essay are actually connected by identifiable logical relationships, the chances are that the essay will be unified. But most students will not be able to identify the logical relationships in their own writing unless we take some pains with "clear thinking."

So far I have been presenting my thesis in a rather indirect way; now I should like to present it more directly. I have said that, assuming that there are certain things we want to get across to students—certain principles to guide them in writing—we need to teach them parts of elementary logic. If they know a little logic, we can make the principles of composition clearer, we can give better reasons for following them, and we can make them stick better in the student's mind and his work. I have used "accuracy" and "unity" as examples, but now I should like to broaden the scope of the discussion. I believe that elementary logic offers *many* usable materials for the composition teacher. Though I cannot present them all here, I shall try to make my thesis plausible by one more example—one that might seem to be fairly remote from the concerns of the composition teacher. Up to this point I have been starting with some notions in rhetoric and tracing them back into logic; now I shall start with some notions in logic and try to show why and how they are useful in rhetoric.

It is a fundamental principle of logic that every statement has a logical form. In grammar you are concerned with the syntactical form of statements; in rhetoric you are concerned with the differences in meaning that emerge from different syntactical forms. Syntactical form is not the same as logical form: *one* of the jobs of syntax is to show the logical form of a sentence, but syntax has other jobs as well. The logical form of a statement depends upon certain abstract relationships among the individuals or classes or substatements it contains. For example, the logical form of the statement, "Not all people are unselfish," consists in the fact that the statement excludes certain members of one class (people) from a second class (unselfish creatures). And the logical form of the statement, "The law cannot be enacted by Congress unless the President co-operates," consists in the fact that the statement asserts that the truth of one statement ("the law cannot be enacted by Congress") is dependent upon the truth of a second statement ("the President does not co-operate").

The logician is interested in the logical form of a statement chiefly for one reason: it is the form of the statement that determines what other statements can be deduced from it and what other state-

ments it can be deduced *from*. The study of this function of logical form, of course, takes you into logic for its own sake. But I am setting all this aside. My question is: Should the student of composition know anything about logical form? In what way will it help the teacher of composition to do his job better, if he makes his students acquainted with that notion?

Now, in order to provide a method for making explicit the logical form of a statement, the logician settles upon certain *standard forms*. Thus, for conditional statements, like that one about the President and Congress, the standard form is "*If* such-and-such, *then* such-and-such." When he wants to exhibit with complete clarity the logical form of such a statement, the logician recasts it in its standard form: "*If* the President does not co-operate, *then* Congress cannot enact the law." Standard forms are a sort of *grammaire raisonné*, or artificial syntax, which the student learns to use for certain specific purposes. They are not, of course, a substitute for ordinary English grammar, but they are valuable tools for handling it.

In fact, a student who has some experience with the method of putting ordinary English sentences into standard logical form is equipped to understand two ideas that are of great importance in composition. I should like to say something about each of these ideas.

My first point has to do with *syntactical ambiguity*. An expression is syntactically ambiguous if there are at least two distinct ways of construing the syntactical relationships among its words. Syntactical ambiguity is often due to ellipsis, as in the example cited by W. V. Quine: "pretty little girls' school," which may be elliptical for (1) "school for pretty little girls," (2) "pretty school for little girls," or (3) "pretty little school for girls." Certainly, syntactical ambiguity is a common fault in student writers. Sometimes it is due to carelessness about relatively simple grammatical rules, such as the rule that nonrestrictive clauses are to be set off in commas; and this type of carelessness can be corrected by drill in grammar, provided that the student is really convinced that he *ought* to avoid syntactical ambiguity. But sometimes it turns up where there is no failure in grammar (as in the example I have given); and in this case the student needs practice in using certain devices for eliminating the ambiguity, such as by filling in an ellipsis. The important point, however, is that it will not help the student much to know how to correct syntactical ambiguity unless he knows how to recognize it in his own writing and to put his finger on its exact location.

And this is where the standard logical forms come in; for they provide a simple and workable method for making explicit the syntactical ambiguity in a given statement. The student learns, for example, that the construction "All men are not unselfish" is syntactically ambiguous, and he learns to expose the ambiguity by recasting the sentence in two different standard forms, each of which is quite unambiguous: either as "Some men are not unselfish" or as "No men are unselfish." It is true that the standard form of a statement is sometimes rather stilted and unnatural. But practicing with standard forms helps the student improve his ability to recognize and eliminate syntactical ambiguities in his own writing.

My second point has to do with what I call "*misleadingness*." This notion depends upon the distinction between what a sentence *states* and what it *suggests*—a distinction that is a little tricky to make precise, though it is quite familiar in ordinary discourse. When a sentence states something that is true but suggests something that is false, the sentence may be said to be "misleading." Consider this example: A student who is doggedly transcribing his meager notes for an essay writes: "Byron was born in 1788, with a club foot, and he committed incest, and became a famous poet." My example is a bit exaggerated, perhaps,

but the fault in it is common. Suppose you object to this sentence; the student may protest, "But the statements are all true." You reply, "Yes, what is stated is true, but putting the statements together like that, in the same sentence, suggests that there is a causal connection between having a club foot, committing incest, and becoming a famous poet. And that is *not* true." "But," says the student, "I didn't *say* that." And to this the only answer is that he did, in one important sense, "say" it, and so his sentence is misleading.

I think this notion of misleadingness can be made clear enough and, at the same time, broad enough to be very useful in rhetoric. It helps to explain what is wrong with elegant variation. It helps to explain the difference between saying, for example, "Though he was poor, he was honest" (which suggests that poverty is likely to lead to dishonesty), and "Though he was honest, he was poor" (which suggests that honesty is likely to lead to wealth). Finally, the notion of misleadingness helps to explain what is wrong with sentences in which the co-ordination or subordination of syntactical elements does not correspond to the actual co-ordination or subordination of ideas. Here I have in mind sentences like "The jury decided that he had committed the murder and that he had been the man observed at the scene of the crime"—where the parallel "that"-clauses after the word "decided" suggest that the clauses report logically co-ordinate conclusions, though it is clear that the two conclusions are not of the same logical order because the fact that the defendant was observed at the scene of the crime is part of the evidence for the hypothesis that he was the murderer. In short, the sentence is misleading because the syntax and the logic work at cross-purposes.

If I am right in thinking that the student of composition ought to have some skill in recognizing and correcting the misleading suggestions in his own writing, then this is another reason for teaching him something about logical form. To grasp the logical form of a sentence is necessary for knowing exactly what the sentence *states*, and a student must know what a sentence states in order to distinguish that clearly from what the sentence *suggests*. When he recasts a sentence into standard form, he is forced to make this distinction and to see the difference between statement and suggestion. He learns that different syntactical forms, which suggest different things, nevertheless state the *same* thing; and hence the logical treatment of statements sharpens his awareness of syntactical differences at the same time that it trains him to recognize logical identities.

To sum up my discussion of logical form: the logician's artificial grammar is useful both as a tool of *explication* and as a tool of *composition*. It is useful for explication because it enables the student, when he is trying to understand a complicated statement containing words like "only," "unless," and "except," to reformulate the statement in the clearest possible way. And it is useful for composition because it enables the student to explicate, and hence to correct, his own writing. I do not say, of course, that the standard form of a sentence is always the best style, but it is a first step in the direction of good style. And I believe that, when a student has some acquaintance with standard forms, he is not so very likely to write sentences like "Laws to effectuate this result cannot be enacted by Congress in the face of noncooperation by the President."

But now we come to the practical problem. Granting, for the moment, that it is desirable for our students of composition to understand logical form, how much need they know? And how does one teach it to them? In order to give the student an adequate conception of logical form, it is not necessary to acquaint him with a large number of different forms, nor is it necessary to be as fussy about details as is the teacher of

logic. Even if only one or two class periods are available for this work, the essential ideas can be made clear. You can limit yourself, for example, to two very simple types of statement: *singular* statements, like "Sally Beauchamp was a medium," which state that a certain individual is, or is not, a member of a certain class of individuals, and *plural* statements, like "Some mediums are frauds," which state that there is a certain relation of partial or complete inclusion between two different classes of individuals. The basic formal distinctions are elementary and quickly understandable. Then you can give the student some practice in recognizing the logical form of various statements. Take the sentence: "People who like George don't like Bertha." The student learns how to pick out the two classes involved, the class of people who like George and the class of people who like Bertha; he learns how to recognize that in this sentence the first class of people is wholly excluded from the second class of people. And he learns to make these things clear by recasting the sentence in standard form: "No people who like George are people who like Bertha." It requires some effort of abstraction, at first, to regard sentences from this point of view, and it takes a little practice before the student is able to handle logical forms with confidence. But this playing around with statements, apart from its intrinsic interest to some students, is a way of getting the student to think in terms of logical form. And I believe that the time spent on logic, instead of imposing an added burden on an already overcrowded course, saves time by helping to make so many other things easier for the student to understand and remember.

I have been writing about some connections between elementary logic and English composition. But if I may take advantage of the fact that the term "elementary logic" is often extended to cover elementary *semantics* as well, I should like to consider that subject briefly.

Elementary semantics has been so well advertised and is bound to seem so much less austere than formal logic that its potential usefulness to the composition teacher is not difficult to grant. The question that arises here is more often the question whether in actual practice some brands of semantics create more trouble for the composition teacher than they are worth. I believe that elementary semantics, when freed from certain eccentricities and muddles, *does* contain a number of important ideas and does furnish some useful methods that can be put to work in teaching composition. But some of the notions that semanticists have cherished are likely to discourage an instructor who tries to teach them and are likely to confuse a student who tries to learn them.

Perhaps I can show what I mean by these general remarks if I say a little about one notion that semanticists have made a considerable noise about: the emotional effects of words. The discoveries of semantics on this point are an important contribution to our knowledge, and we can put these discoveries to good use. It is essential for students to be aware of the emotional effects of words, and especially of the subtler differences of effect in pairs of words that are nearly synonymous—"spinster" and "unmarried adult female," for example. The student needs to understand how these emotional responses get in the way of clear thinking and transform reasonable disagreements into deadlocked disputes. The student needs to understand how question-begging words slip into a discourse under the protective cover of an emotional appeal, so that people think they have settled an issue when they have only by-passed it.

And there are simple and interesting techniques for helping the student here. He takes emotional discourse and tones it down by substituting neutral terms for the emotional ones. He takes relatively calm discourse and tones it *up*. He experiments with the possibilities of cool-

ing off emotional terms by placing them in certain contexts. A few classroom hours will not teach him all there is to know, but it will give him an invaluable sensitivity to this aspect of words, which will be reflected in the emphasis and coherence of his writing.

But when we ask the student to practice such exercises as these, we must be very clear what we are doing. And what we are *not* doing. We are *not* teaching him that there are two mutually exclusive classes of words, "emotive" and "referential"—words that purr or snarl and words that merely hold their hands over their mouths and point. We are *not* teaching him that there is a special kind of discourse, known as "emotive" discourse, having two species, poetry and propaganda, which differ only in the sincerity of their writers' sentiments. We are *not* saying that "emotive meaning" is a special kind of meaning that has no connection with cognitive meaning. To sum up, we do *not* want the student to come out with the idea that "Grade A beefsteak" and "first-class piece of dead steer" have exactly the same cognitive meaning and differ only in emotional effect.

I think the crudities of the earlier semantics have quite justifiably led some teachers to regard it with misgiving, and the point I want to make is that, as semantics has developed and become more sophisticated, it has moved toward a closer harmony with the needs and interests of rhetoric. Earlier semantics put its money on the Ogden and Richards division of "emotive" from "referential" words. But semantics has come more and more to emphasize the extent to which emotional effects depend *upon* cognitive meaning. This puts emotive meaning into a much more manageable framework, and it gives the student a more reasonable perspective on the problem of controlling emotive language.

I have raised more questions than I have answered. I should not want to claim that present-day logic and semantics can solve all the composition-teacher's problems. But it seems to me that these disciplines offer a number of important distinctions, principles, and methods that composition teachers can use to do their job more effectively and more efficiently. This is the practical, or pedagogical, part of my thesis; but before concluding I am tempted to pause for a larger view. I have been exploring, very tentatively, part of the territory where three fields of knowledge come together: logic, semantics, and rhetoric. A good deal has been done to bring these three fields into a coherent body of ideas, but there is also a good deal more to be done. And I believe something substantial—and exciting—will emerge from the activities now going on at all levels along these borders. I think we are in the process of constructing a new rhetoric, which will bring together the many discoveries in poetics that contemporary critics have been making and which will be firmly and securely based on logic and semantics. With such a new rhetoric, whose outlines are now faintly visible, we shall be able to make better answers to our old and troublesome questions—and we shall be able to give more help to our students. But this goal can be attained only by close co-operation between several disciplines. And one place where that co-operation can be fruitfully carried on is the freshman course in composition; for this course is the laboratory in which an acceptable system of rhetoric has to be tested and confirmed.

HISTORY ONE REVISITED

Edward Whiting Fox

THE introductory survey course in history is a hardy perennial of faculty discussion. It might well be questioned whether the breath expended on this subject could better have been saved to cool inflamed professorial tempers. As with most political questions—and the survey course is highly charged politically in academic circles—continued controversy can prove barren. Certainly, there would be little excuse for adding one more chapter to the debate at this point if it were not that American universities and colleges face immediate, inevitable, and drastic modification of their existing curriculums. Under the circumstances it is perhaps useful to review the problems of the survey course once again in this newest context.[1]

In the summer of 1951 one can predict that most young men will be obliged to perform two or more years of military service at an age when many of them would normally have been in college. The effect of this on the students and—through them—on the colleges is not clear. If the experience of World War II is taken as an indication, it could be assumed that the men, at least, will apply for admission to college younger, will try to get as much education—or at least as many academic credits—as possible before induction, and will tend to orient their programs along what are taken to be practical lines, that is, with much more mathematics and science or, in some cases, foreign language than usual. The chief differences in the present situation will derive from the fact that, barring spread of the war in Korea, faculties and administrators will have to base their plans on the assumption that this is to be a long-continuing condition, not a finite crisis. For those teaching the humanities this will mean that there will be much less time with which to work and no lessening of responsibility for what is to be accomplished. The manner in which readjustments are made will not represent a wartime sacrifice of even an entire generation. It will tend to control the cultural content of our society for the foreseeable future.

The place of the history survey course in this vast panorama may seem small enough, but it is none the less definite. This is not the occasion to argue that some understanding of our heritage is necessary to preserve our sense of direction, not to mention our determination or morale, in a period of stress and struggle. The immediate problem is rather what is the best use that can be made of

[1] Parts of this essay have been drawn from an unpublished paper, "What Can Be Expected of an Introductory Survey Course?" which the author read at the 1949 meeting of the American Historical Association; from the "Development of Western Civilization," syllabus for the Cornell survey course of European history; and from the author's Introduction to *The Emergence of Rome as Ruler of the Western World* by Chester G. Starr, Jr., the first volume of "The Development of Western Civilization: Narrative Essays in the History of Our Tradition," which is being published by the Cornell University Press.

The title is intended to refer generically to the traditional narrative survey course and specifically to the prototype made famous at Harvard by Professors Coolidge, Haskins, and Merriman. Anyone familiar with this course, now superseded by Social Sciences 1—described by David Owen in the October, 1950, issue of this *Journal*—will recognize both the many points of similarity and the important differences between the Harvard prototype and the Cornell course described below.

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historical materials in the brief time available in the college curriculum.

Perhaps the most reasonable assumption with which to work is that a large number (half or more) of all liberal-arts college students will continue to take a year's course in history but that many fewer will find it possible to continue with other history courses. This suggests that history courses available for beginning college students should be carefully planned not only to introduce the methods and content of the subject but to do so in such a way as to prepare and encourage the student to pursue its further study on his own initiative if circumstances do not permit him to continue in other formal courses. This is an ambitious goal, which by its very nature can never be fully realized; but its alternative would be the virtual abdication of the historical profession in the area of general education.

The question, then, is what elements of our history and historical method can most effectively and most profitably be imparted to American college students in the foreshortened programs they will be obliged to follow. This is not to imply that a single set of specifications can be formulated which will be equally applicable to all colleges. What is the best possible, or at least a very useful, course in one place will differ more or less from equally useful courses in other institutions. This is an important qualification because in the following discussion Cornell University's course, "Development of Western Civilization," will be used as a concrete example. Developed in 1947 at an institution that had never before offered a survey course in history, it was planned, and is constantly being revised, to meet existing conditions without either the assets or the liabilities of an established tradition. It represents, therefore, one attempt to cope consciously and directly with the problems which are at once inherent in this type of instruction and critical in the present situation. It is offered here as an example, not a model.

The problems of reducing the basic elements of history to the dimensions of a single course are all too familiar to anyone who has been concerned with the operation of a survey course. There are, however, elements in the present situation which, though readily knowable, are less recognized than the more dramatic—if more difficult—problems of the future about which there is so much speculation. The changes which have already occurred at this level of American education may well be as great and significant as any that lie ahead.

Perhaps the best clue to these recent developments, at least in the present context, is to be found in the sharp drop in popularity suffered by the more conventional "History 1" type of narrative introductory courses during the last decade. Courses that had enjoyed legendary success in the twenties and thirties suddenly fell under violent attack and in many instances were replaced by "newer" and more liberal forms of historical instruction. It is interesting to note that these courses, based on greater use of source material, were adaptations of techniques introduced at least a quarter of a century ago, which, as bright young ideas today, have rather the air of the *jeunesse royaliste* of the 1890's that boasted an average age and girth of something over forty. However substantial the reasons for substituting source materials for narrative text or problems for essays, the methods were by no means new. The new factor was that the more conventional courses had suddenly become impossibly difficult for all but a small minority of the entering freshmen.

In the confusion of the war and postwar periods, not much notice was taken of a coincidental, but essentially independent, development in university education. It was somewhere about 1940 that the long process of liberalizing college entrance requirements reached—at least for practical purposes—its ultimate conclusion of total elimination of all specific content from admission standards.

Without entering into the question of cause and effect, it must be admitted that entering freshmen today are not only less able to read but have read far less than their prewar predecessors. To meet this situation, most colleges and universities are now tending to offer what amounts to two years of freshman instruction. It is not uncommon to find first-year students following a program consisting of required English, review algebra, geometry, a double course of introductory French or German, and one other subject, perhaps a science or social science.

Leaving aside the last category, none of this work would have been accepted for credit ten years ago. Freshman composition was required of those who failed to demonstrate a modest proficiency in the use of their mother-tongue and was not recognized for credit toward graduation. What is rapidly becoming the standard freshman mathematics course in many colleges was introduced at the beginning of the war as a means of helping men review high-school work for purposes of military service and was not originally considered worthy of formal credit. The six hours of language instruction may, in some cases, represent an important advance over training available before the war, but it should be noted that it may now be taken by students who have presented three years of the same language for admission credit. In other words, today's sophomore will probably be at essentially the same point in college training as his predecessor of the class of 1940 was in the beginning of his freshman year.

If nothing else, this should put an end to the theoretical discussion of the merits of the three-year college program. It is now an accomplished fact. Unfortunately, however, that is not to say that today's sophomore is as good as the prewar freshman, because a freshman program such as the one just cited cannot possibly include the general reading that used to make up an important part of a high-school education. The rapid disappearance of classical languages and modern literature has made far more difficult the task of teaching college history courses, not in any mystical or disciplinary sense but in terms of simple content. Even students who trotted their way through Caesar knew more about the Roman state and its barbarian neighbors than almost any of today's entering class. And those brought up on Walter Scott at least had misconceptions of the Middle Ages upon which to draw. The extent of literary innocence among college students today is something that most faculty members are not likely to appreciate fully for some time to come. It is possible, for example, to find that half the members of a large history course have never even heard of Magna Carta.

In such facts as these lies the major explanation of the failure of postwar freshmen to follow smoothly in the intellectual footsteps of their predecessors. Not only are they totally unprepared to read the 100–120 pages of text which were a standard week's assignment in the 1930's, but they cannot possibly follow the old accounts with profit. Names and dates, which were once part of our cultural vocabulary, have become esoteric items, to be looked up and learned.

All this adds up to the conclusion that, since introductory instruction in history is provided for more than half the students now entering liberal-arts colleges and will hold an increasingly important place in the curriculums of the future, it must meet the needs of a representative body of today's high-school graduates, who lack not only previous training in European history but any systematic understanding of the English language or familiarity with the standard literary classics of our tradition.

It is against this background of intellectual innocence, then, as well as in the light of potential curriculum changes that it is necessary to consider the survey course. The first college course in history is now *introductory* in an entirely new

sense. When the word was used a quarter of a century ago, it implied an introduction to the study of history on a more mature level; today it means the initiation of the student in the whole frame of reference of the collective memory of his society.

At the very outset, this raises the question of the chronological and geographical scope of the course in an entirely new form. For students who know nothing of their historical origins, outside the confines of the continental United States, it becomes a serious matter to decide at what point their introduction should begin and how much it should include. The problem is rendered almost impossibly acute when the opportunity for instruction is limited to a single course and when it is recognized that the student's familiarity with any part of his cultural inheritance is almost nil and his ability to handle printed materials is undeveloped at best. Insuperable as these obstacles may seem, the necessity to reach back to the origins of our tradition is overriding.

The old formula of the fall of Rome to tomorrow's *New York Times* no longer has the same satisfying ring as when our society was confidently completing its long but certain climb from chaos to Calvin Coolidge. And some of the more common alternative opening dates, such as the year 1000 or the early Renaissance or even the Peace of Westphalia, are even less satisfactory. Where they reduce the range and make the task of coverage more simple, they leave out all account of the beginnings and early determination of our civilization, which is no longer provided through any study of the classics, the Bible, or ancient history. In facing this problem at Cornell, it was decided that the attempt must be made to begin with the early Greeks and Hebrews and to sketch, in a more or less connected narrative, the development of Western civilization. Only in that way, it was felt, would it be possible to develop adequately the concept of the dignity and integrity of the individual which had its origin in those early societies and has ever since remained the central characteristic of that civilization we are now being urged to defend.

This decision led directly to the question of pace of presentation, particularly to the chronological dividing line to be reached at the end of the first term. Working on the analogy of the human memory, which tends to preserve remote happenings with more clarity and less detail than is possible in the crowded recollections of the immediate past, it was decided to abandon the traditional practice of breaking the course at approximately the chronological middle and bring the dividing line much nearer to the present. The date finally adopted was 1789, on the assumption that the modern world effectively begins with the political revolution in France and the more or less simultaneous industrial revolution in Britain. It was felt that, however necessary it was to identify the roots of our tradition, it was equally important to work over the more recent and therefore less ordered experience of the last century and a half in more detail and with more care. The course then carries the narrative through the ancient, medieval, and early modern periods in fifteen weeks at a gradually diminishing speed and devotes the second term to the history of Western society since the end of the eighteenth century. The slower pace in the second term promised to ease some of the standard difficulties encountered in a survey course; but the vast range for the first term, presented to students still in the process of becoming accustomed to college methods of work, seemed all but impossible to accomplish.

The only basis on which such an attempt could be made was the proposition that any historical development should be susceptible of treatment on any scale. However sound the theory may be, the practice is not easy. The first specific obstacle to its implementation was the lack of a suitable text. By a process of "cut-

ting and pasting" assignments from a number of different books, the course has managed to run with more or less satisfaction to the students and staff during the last three years. At best, however, this was a stopgap arrangement, and it was obvious from the start that a special set of materials would have to be provided if the course was to survive. This was undertaken at the end of the first year, and a series of narrative essays on the development of Western civilization is now being published. Before discussing the series itself, however, it might be well to consider some of the other basic questions of organization of the course.

One of the most common criticisms of the old introductory course was that it relied too heavily on the lecture method. Many of the better colleges and universities are proud of introductory history courses conducted entirely in small sections and participated in by all members, or at least members from all ranks, of the history department. In some cases the course actually enlists the services of members of a number of other humanities departments. In theory and frequently in practice this has proved to be a most attractive form of instruction. At Cornell in 1946 any such use of manpower was quite out of the question. From the start, therefore, it was necessary to assume that lectures would be an important aspect of the course. The limitations of Cornell's resources have no general validity in a discussion of the survey course except that they probably coincide with limitations that will become increasingly prevalent throughout liberal-arts faculties in the near future.

Teaching a large introductory survey course exclusively in sections is an expensive form of education. It is not only the cost in dollars and cents to the administration that is at stake but also the distribution of the efforts of the members of the department. Even where individual departments may escape the decimation that was widely experienced during the last war, the phenomenon of senior professors presenting the inevitable explanations and elucidations that go with teaching freshman sections, in series, represents a duplication of effort which will become increasingly difficult to justify, particularly in a narrative-type course. The method is essential in courses based primarily on the use of source materials or the development of special problems. Although very popular in some quarters, the usefulness of these devices threatens to decline radically in the near and middle future. Their great value when they were introduced twenty or thirty years ago was to liberalize instruction that was packing students' heads with disconnected names and dates. Today there is little need for concern about students with too much factual knowledge and too little comprehension; the chief problem now is rather to impart a basic structure of information upon which some understanding may be built. Narrative history may be a skeleton which needs urgently to be clothed with the flesh and blood of source material, but flesh and blood with all the skeleton missing are not likely to present an imposing facsimile of Western man.

The problem of the first term of the course, then, was to present the maximum quantity of narrative material consonant with clarity of focus and absorptive power of the class. It was from this necessity, combined with the general objectives of the course, that the plan for the narrative essays derived. The most feasible and promising approach seemed to be to invite a number of able scholars, who had experience in this general type of instruction, to contribute to a series of narrative essays which together would cover the entire field. This held the possibility at least of getting the work done within a reasonable length of time, since each author would contribute only thirty or at the most sixty thousand words. It also meant that the ruthless cutting and simplification which would be necessary to meet the new time scale would be done by an expert in each field.

The essays are now beginning to appear, bound separately in paper covers. The first, *The Emergence of Rome* by Chester G. Starr, Jr., was used in a number of courses last fall; *The Age of Reason* by Frank E. Manuel has just come from the Cornell University Press; two by Sidney Painter and a third by Charles E. Nowell are now in press; and several more are due to be published in the summer and fall.

When completed, the series will provide an independent but carefully related essay as background reading for each week of the course. The authors have been urged to write for a mature but wholly uninformed audience. They have been asked not to assume that the reader will recognize any name that is not identified or introduced and to delete all names not integral to the narrative—no matter how firmly fixed they may be in historical protocol. While the author's first responsibility is to describe what he takes to be the basic developments of his period, he is also encouraged to make clear his own interpretation of these events. Although this will lead to divergencies and even contradictions in interpretation, they will be allowed to stand on the assumption that the shift from week to week will not so much impede the progress as contribute to the intellectual growth of the student. No illusion is more easily acquired by the student in an elementary course or is more prejudicial to the efficacy of such a course than that a single smoothly articulated text represents the very substance of history itself.

This tolerance of different points of view should, in addition, give the beginner as much indication as he can profitably absorb of the variety of interpretations possible. It would hardly be practical, perhaps not even desirable, to attempt a serious comparison of philosophies of history for students who still knew so little history. The variety of viewpoints represented by the contributors will at least suggest the possibility of serious and honest differences of historical approach to the brighter members of the class.[2]

In one other respect the series has been adjusted specifically to the needs of such a course. Each contributor has been urged to look upon his essay as the foundation upon which lectures will be imposed. There has been an inevitable tendency among the standard commercial textbooks to reproduce in print the substance of brilliant classroom lectures. Not only is such a book easy for the lecturer to write, but it provides bright and attractive reading. It is only an instructor who has found himself lecturing in competition with such a text who will fully appreciate the fallacy of this method. Quite possibly, occasional brilliant texts have cost us the price of hundreds of stultifying lectures. With the pyrotechnics of colorful illustrations and sweeping interpretations on the page, the poor devil on the platform is left with the unenviable task of providing factual documentation for the text. This not only has led to long series of lectures, which begin with the last date of the preceding hour and end with the first of the one to follow, but has also made customary a large amount of repetition between page and platform, a failing which has tended to vitiate both forms of presentation. The student who is too lazy to read will substitute the lecture, while the more able or ambitious, having done the reading, will sink into ennui and damn lecturer and lectures with a false sense of intellectual superiority.

If the Cornell essay series can succeed in this aim of providing the base for lectures, it should not only speed the prog-

[2] In an article on "The Historical Problem of the Fall of Rome" which appeared in the October, 1950, issue of this *Journal*, Livio C. Stecchini found the plan of this series unsatisfactory on the ground that it never presented more than one interpretation of any given subject. However valid this criticism is in connection with a senior course such as the Chicago "History of Western Civilization," it seems irrelevant to an introductory freshman survey.

ress of the course but help re-establish the very useful and honored place that lecturing once held in American college teaching. If the instructor can omit all factual narrative from his lecture on the assumption that it was provided by the text, he can concentrate on the far more appropriate task of interpreting the materials provided and discussing the significance of past experience applied to present problems.

No matter how carefully planned or executed, however, lectures and texts are not enough to make a satisfactory survey course. These methods and materials are both strange to the average freshman, and much patient and resourceful help is needed to bring him to put them to effective use. To meet this need, the Cornell course added weekly section meetings to be taught by carefully chosen and directed graduate students. The first, if not the only, problem faced by these assistants was to help their students learn to read and write. Too often, this meant the comprehension or construction of a simple sentence; but for most members of the class this progressed fairly rapidly to a level of assessing relative importance, of selecting material relevant to a given point, and of rearranging material to test a hypothesis or support a thesis. In all the section meetings the chief emphasis is placed on written work, from the initial introduction, to the techniques of taking notes, and to the final task of constructing a documented essay of several thousand words. Effort is made to train the students to think of reading the text or writing examinations as two simple forms of historical thought: the process of relating specific illustrations to a general proposition.

Those members of the class who demonstrate some proficiency in the basic technique of essay writing are excused from further section work after the first formal examination (in the sixth week of the course) and are allowed to substitute monthly conference group meetings. In these, six or eight students meet for two or three hours with a course assistant to discuss extra reading, drawn at least in part from source materials. The additional burden of reading is not great, and the added satisfaction is almost always felt to be adequate recompense for the effort expended. By the beginning of the second term nearly a third of the class is assigned to conference groups.

Without the opportunity for direct give-and-take between student and assistant that is provided by the sections and conference groups, the possibility of making this type of introductory course function efficiently dwindles off to the vanishing point. Perhaps even more effective than round-table conversations about the larger historical questions is the direct impact of careful criticism of the students' written work by competent instructors. And it may be added that the frequently encountered prejudice against the use of graduate assistants is a deplorable and unjustifiable reflection on the promise and training of the future members of the historical profession. Not only can the very young instructor be an adequate teacher in such circumstances, but he may actually be superior to his elders and betters when it comes to intellectual give-and-take with the beginning student.

To facilitate this program, for both student and teacher, a syllabus has been developed which not only contains a detailed calendar of reading assignments and other obligations of the course but also includes specific instructions for, and illustrations of, note taking and essay writing. This pamphlet has proved to be a useful tool, not only simplifying the mechanics of a complicated and highly organized course but actually saving classroom time that would otherwise be devoted to administrative business.

Experience with this course in "Development of Western Civilization" at Cornell during the last three years indicates that the methods and materials de-

scribed above can be made to meet in substance the general objectives posited for the introductory survey course. Even with students almost wholly lacking in relevant background or preparation, it has proved possible to bring the bulk of the class up to a reasonable standard of performance both in the reading of historical texts and materials and in the critical use of information to test the validity or develop the potentialities of a general historical hypothesis. In addition to this, the content of the final examination papers has demonstrated beyond question that a good deal of factual information has been absorbed and, on the whole, in terms of an over-all pattern of historical development. And, finally, these results were not achieved at the expense of an extravagant outlay of departmental time or effort. Only one member of the department was regularly assigned to the course. Some others contributed occasional lectures, and the burden of the sections and conference groups was carried by a staff of graduate assistants.

How this course or others attempting to fill a similar place in other institutions will have to be adjusted to the changing conditions of the future remains to be seen. What does seem clear, however, is that there are ways of meeting, to some effective extent, the needs for historical instruction which cannot decrease even with the inevitable curtailment of the traditional college program.

It is still possible, even in this period of readjustment, to provide for today's entering freshman an effective introduction to the discipline of historical study and thought and to the content of the western European civilization within which, for better or worse, he is to play his part.

AN EXERCISE IN READING HISTORY

XENOPHON ON THE SURRENDER OF ATHENS

Saul Levin

Most histories, like most novels, can be read with enjoyment and profit by anyone interested in the story, regardless of how little he knew before. Philosophy and poetry often require intense concentration and the help of a teacher or commentator; but both the language and the content of a history are usually close enough to what we talk about every day so that we can easily follow the narrative. Indeed, even if the events are recounted dishonestly or unintelligently, we are still likely to absorb the historian's version of them, without noticing any difficulty. We read history for pleasure and edification but, above all, for information; and, if we come away misinformed, we have failed as readers of history. When our historian is competent and reliable, we should not be content to drink in all that he supplies. We ought to be stimulated to reflect upon it.

I will not answer the question whether Xenophon is a good or a bad historian. Either way, he is an indispensable authority on the last seven years of the Peloponnesian War, after the history of Thucydides leaves off; and his account of the surrender of Athens is a representative excerpt from the *Hellenica*, his history of Greece from 411 to 362 B.C.

Many readers must find this narrative, reproduced on the following page, as instantly comprehensible as a news report. At most, they will encounter a few obstacles. Certain names in it may be unfamiliar and hard to pronounce; it is natural to remember the events while forgetting the names of persons and places. The art of reading history begins with paying closer attention to names than people usually do.

A few terms have to be defined. *Ephors* (in secs. 13 ff.) were the elected executives of the Lacedaemonian government. Ten *stades* (sec. 15) equals about 6,000 feet. The *Long Walls* connected Athens with her seaports and permitted the city to be supplied from overseas if cut off from the hinterland by enemy action.

In earlier chapters of the *Hellenica*, Xenophon has identified Agis as king of Sparta, in command of the besieging army, and Lysander as another Lacedaemonian in command of the besieging fleet.

With such elementary assistance, we are amply equipped to give this little chunk of history a second thought and to describe the author's arrangement of his material, his analysis of causes, the viewpoint from which he presents the incidents, his veracity and accuracy, and, finally, his conception of what a history should contain.

I

We may remark at once that Xenophon has constructed his account on the most obvious principle available to a historian: sequence in time. The setting is laid in the opening section (10), and then the events are arranged to follow in clearly marked stages, most of which are introduced by the word *after*:[1] "After they had run out of food altogether"; "After the envoys reported that to the Athenians"; "After the envoys reached

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[1] ἐπεί.

THE SURRENDER OF ATHENS*

[10.] The Athenians, besieged by land and sea, were at their wit's end, without ships or allies or food. They could see no escape from being treated as they had treated small cities, which they had wronged without provocation, through arrogance, for no cause except that they were fighting on the other side. [11.] On account of this record, the Athenians held out, re-enfranchising the citizens in bad standing; and although many were dying of hunger in the city, they would not discuss an armistice.

But after they had run out of food altogether, they did send envoys to Agis and desired a treaty on these terms: they would be allies of the Lacedaemonians but would keep their walls and Piraeus. [12.] Agis told them that they should go to Lacedaemon, that he had no authority. After the envoys reported that to the Athenians, they sent them to Lacedaemon. [13.] After the envoys reached Sellasia, on the outskirts of Laconia, the ephors inquired what message they had. It was like the one to Agis. The ephors ordered them to turn around and go back, and if they wanted peace, to come with a better program. [14.] After the envoys came home and reported this to the city, dismay seized everyone. They thought that they would be sold into slavery, and that while another embassy was being sent, many would die of famine. [15.] But no one would advocate tearing down the walls, for Archestratus was imprisoned for saying in the senate that it was best to make peace on the terms proposed by the Lacedaemonians. The proposal was, to tear down a stretch of ten stades from each of the Long Walls. The Athenians voted to forbid discussion of it. [16.] In this situation, Theramenes declared in the assembly that if they would send him to Lysander, on his return he could inform them whether the Lacedaemonians were stubborn about the walls in order to wipe out the city, or for security reasons.

He was sent to Lysander and whiled away three months or more, waiting until the Athenians, on account of running out of food, would consent to whatever they were told. [17.] After he returned in the fourth month, he reported to the assembly that Lysander had detained him all the while and finally told him to go to Lace-

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Sellasia"; "After the envoys came home"; "After he returned in the fourth month"; "After Theramenes and the other envoys reached Sellasia"; "After they arrived." For reasons unnecessary to pursue in this analysis, Xenophon does not tell the month and the day of any of these happenings, but he is careful to recount them in the proper order. He methodically or automatically uses *after* when we can infer that several days or weeks had elapsed with nothing new. The word *thereupon*,[2] on the other hand, introduces an event that followed on the same day or so: "Theramenes was thereupon elected"; "Thereupon the ephors had them summoned"; "Thereupon Lysander sailed into Piraeus."

We are bound to misunderstand any narrative where the incidents appear in a confusing order. Therefore it is reassuring to see that Xenophon habitually set things down in the order that they occurred. However, the habit is practical only when the events are successive, not simultaneous. After Theramenes left Lysander, they reported the parleys to their respective governments. Theramenes in person, Lysander by messenger. Xenophon puts Theramenes' report in section 17, Lysander's in the next section; but doubtless Lysander sent his report no later.

[2] μετὰ ταῦτα.

daemon, for not he but the ephors had authority to answer Theramenes' question. Theramenes was thereupon elected ambassador plenipotentiary to Lacedaemon, with nine others. [18.] Lysander sent an Athenian exile, Aristoteles, under Lacedaemonian escort to the ephors, to tell them he had replied to Theramenes that *they* had authority over peace and war. [19.] After Theramenes and the other envoys reached Sellasia, they were asked on what basis they came; and they replied, "With full power to make peace." Thereupon the ephors had them summoned. After they arrived, an essembly was held, at which the Corinthians and Thebans in particular, but many other Greeks also, urged no truce with the Athenians, but annihilation. [20.] But the Lacedaemonions said they would not wipe out a Greek city which had done a great service in the greatest perils that had befallen Greece. They offered peace on condition that the Athenians dismantle the Long Walls and the Piraeus fortifications, surrender all but twelve ships, take the exiles back in, treat the friends and enemies of the Lacedaemonians as their own, and follow their leadership everywhere on land and sea.

[21.] Theramenes and his fellow ambassadors brought these terms back to Athens. As they entered, they were surrounded by a large crowd, afraid that they had come empty-handed. It was too late to stall, on account of the multitude of those starving to death. [22.] The next day, the envoys reported the Lacedaemonian peace-terms; Theramenes was their spokesman. He said Athens must yield to the Lacedaemonians and remove the walls. Some expressed opposition, but many more seconded him; and it was voted to accept the peace. [23.] Thereupon Lysander sailed into Piraeus, the exiles returned, and as flute-girls played, they demolished the walls with great enthusiasm, believing that day would usher in freedom for Greece.

* Xenophon *Hellenica* ii. 2. 10–12. Translated by Saul Levin.

Even successive events are not always presented in sequence. In section 15 we learn of a Lacedaemonian peace offer, on condition that part of the Long Walls be demolished. When was this offer made? It can scarcely be fitted in anywhere, unless we revise sections 13–15 and number the incidents in them as follows:

1. The Athenian envoys arrive in Sellasia.
2. The ephors ask them their business.
3. The envoys repeat the Athenian peace terms offered to Agis.
4. The ephors dismiss them, but with a counterproposal that ten stades of the Long Walls be demolished.
5. The envoys return to Athens with the counterproposal.
6. The Athenian assembly votes to forbid discussion of it.
7. Archestratus, in the senate, advocates yielding to the Lacedaemonians.
8. Archestratus is put in prison.

Now this rearrangement of Xenophon's material is plausible, if only tentative; whereas Xenophon's own arrangement is puzzling or even misleading. It may give the impression that Archestratus was imprisoned *before* any resolution was passed against discussing the Lacedaemonian proposal. Without placing undue confidence in my reconstruction, we may speculate why Xenophon's account at this one point is so much less lucid than elsewhere. Were his informants, or maybe his own memory, less coherent? Did he give way to some hidden bias? Did he feel animus against the Athenians for putting Archestratus in jail, or against the Lacedaemonians for scorning the Athenian peace terms?

We must suspend judgment on these questions. As often in a history, further reading may dispel our doubts. Meanwhile, Xenophon's account of the negotiations leading up to the surrender of

Athens will stand as fairly acceptable, at least for the temporal sequence of events.

II

But we desire more than that—namely, some analysis or interpretation to show how the events fit together, for a history is not a mere series of superficial glimpses. The events meant something to Xenophon, and his understanding of them deserves careful consideration. But certain minor flaws get in the way.

Particularly, his opening statement (in sec. 10) that the Athenians were "without ships or allies or food" is not literally true. He tells us later (in sec. 20) that the Lacedaemonians offered to let them keep twelve ships. Elsewhere in the *Hellenica*,[3] he reports that Samos remained a faithful alley of Athens and even held out after Athens surrendered. The food shortage in section 10 was not so bad but what it could get worse, in section 11, where we are told, "They had run out of food altogether"; then in section 16, Theramenes was still waiting until they would run out of food. When Xenophon wrote "without ships or allies or food," he slipped into the emotion, distortion, and exaggeration of ordinary people discussing current events. That is not altogether a fault in a historian: at least it makes the narrative livelier and gives us an inkling of how people felt. In this instance, the sober facts are not much different. The ships that remained to Athens were more than a dozen but too few to stand a fighting chance against the blockading fleet; and the remaining allies could no longer lend Athens any help.

"Without food" is a more serious distortion. During a siege some people must have been closer to starvation than others, who were better hoarders or had more money to buy what little was still for sale. But the number of households not in immediate danger would decrease rapidly. Xenophon's clumsy wording is especially regrettable, because it obscures his own division of the negotiations into four stages which correspond with the gradual worsening of the famine. (These stages have been indicated by paragraph indentations in the accompanying translation.) The Athenians already know they have lost the war, but they fight on, because they have a guilty conscience and expect no mercy. Second, they want peace but will not hear of knocking down the walls. Third, they give Theramenes full power to make peace on any terms. Finally, they are afraid that even their surrender has been rejected. At each new stage, Xenophon connects the weakening of their will to resist with the ravages of famine.

That, in a word, is Xenophon's explanation of the surrender of Athens. We must not infer that he considered the pressure of hunger to be behind *other* great events, and we cannot demand of him any theory of underlying causes. He uses the word *cause*[4] as Herodotus and Thucydides did,[5] to mean a charge, a complaint, a recrimination, an avowed grudge. The more abstract notion of "cause," which grew out of this original meaning, has not entered Xenophon's thinking. That should not surprise us, for even today we seldom look for any underlying cause when we are close, emotionally, to the event. By "the causes of railroad strikes" we mean little more than the demands stated by the union. "The cause for which we are fighting in Korea" virtually amounts to the grounds announced by the President for sending the Army there.

When Xenophon alludes to the Athenians destroying small cities "for no cause except that they were fighting on the other side" (sec. 10), *cause* means merely the grounds given by the Athenians for their action. Ask them, "Why did you destroy those cities?" or "What cause did you have?" and the Athenians reply, "They were fighting on the other side." Xenophon was capable of giving a different answer of his own to the question, "Why did the Athenians do it?" He says,

[3] ii. 2. 6, ii. 3. 6.

[4] *aitia*.

[5] E.g., the opening sentence of Herodotus, and Thucydides i. 23. 6.

"Through arrogance." *Arrogance* is one of many imperfect English equivalents for the Greek word ὕβρις, something that people display when they take advantage of their strength or wealth to make others suffer. It is not unlike *sadism*, in the broad and not strictly sexual sense. Xenophon adduces it to explain the uncalled-for wrongs that the Athenians had committed when they were riding high.

Nowhere else in this narrative does he bring in what *we* might call a recurrent factor in human nature or some other cause that helps to explain events. While I said he has no word for *cause*, as now used by historians and philosophers, he is still capable of answering the question "Why?" He does it with a preposition[6] which I have translated *through* or *on account of*: "through arrogance"; "on account of this"; "on account of running out of food"; "on account of the multitude of those starving to death." Such phrases explain the behavior of the Athenians on several occasions; they do not add up to a theory of causation.

Except for these few occasions, Xenophon does not bother to tell us *why* people did thus and so. He tells *what* they did and said and seldom digs for any hidden analysis of the events. Take his report of the conference at Lacedaemon (secs. 19–20), where "the Lacedaemonians said they would not wipe out a Greek city which had done a great service in the greatest perils that had befallen Greece." This sentence can illustrate both the merits and the limitations of Xenophon as a historian. He makes of it a dramatic summary of the speech by an official of Lacedaemon in reply to the demand of Corinth and Thebes that Athens be destroyed. As far as it goes, the statement is illuminating and singularly edifying. The Lacedaemonians decided to spare Athens, in recognition of her part in the Persian Wars seventy-five years earlier. They must have felt that Athens still had some claim on them, although her merits were so far in the past. We need not doubt their sincerity; but did they have some additional motive? Xenophon reports only what they said at the conference with their allies, not what they were thinking in private. We can imagine that perhaps unknown to Xenophon they were calculating as follows: "The war is won; and, if we spare the Athenians, they may be useful as a counterpoise to our allies, the Thebans, who are growing too powerful in that part of Greece." The Lacedaemonians would never *talk* that way in front of the Thebans; but, if they *thought* that way, it was bound to influence them in favor of Athens. Nowadays, one may compare the reasoning of Americans after Germany and Japan were beaten.

[6] διὰ.

III

We cannot help but read between the lines; yet we must do it with caution, being conscious that we are speculating. We assume that no noble or unselfish act can be taken at face value, that people naturally conceal their more sordid motives. On the other hand, a man's enemies will place his acts in the worst possible light. A historian can steer us between the two poles of distortion, if he is not blinded by partisanship himself, and especially if he is more interested in presenting what was said and done than in proving his own interpretation of the events. Inevitably he will write from a certain viewpoint; and, if we can figure it out, it will help us measure his reliability and comprehend his choice and his organization of data.

This passage from Xenophon is mainly a report of actions and speeches. His own comments are few; his viewpoint is not obtrusive. Yet it is perceptible. Every incident is narrated as it looked to an anxious Athenian eye. We get not the whole debate at Lacedaemon but the gist of it as it fell on a tense Athenian ear. In section 16 the Lacedaemonians' motive for insisting that the walls be dismantled is brought up because the Athenians are so uncertain and worried about it. Xenophon achieves *dramatic* effective-

ness by tacitly adopting one viewpoint throughout. This may or may not compromise him as a *critical* historian, whose business is to ferret out the unbiased truth. A viewpoint does not necessarily commit the historian's sympathies so much to one side as to vitiate his testimony as an eyewitness and his judgment of what he receives from other sources.

Whether that happened in Xenophon's case is disputed and cannot be argued merely on the basis of this excerpt. However, it is apparent that an account of the events as they affected the Athenians does not mean an account prejudiced in favor of the Athenians. Upon one cursory reading, we can instantly acquit Xenophon of unreliability on that score, for he is not an uncritical lover of Athens. He betrays no strong leanings either way.

IV

But this does not establish his veracity and accuracy. Other fountainheads of error are still conceivable. First, did Xenophon start out to write with enough information? Most likely he was in Athens all through the siege; if so, he might witness much that took place there, but nothing elsewhere. The details of a history are never all equally trustworthy. Had Xenophon supplied footnotes specifying his authority for each statement, we could readily discriminate between better and worse material. As it is, we have no sure criteria and are reduced to tentative inferences based on plausibility and consistency. We might inquire to what extent Xenophon is confirmed or contradicted by other ancient writers who touch upon the surrender of Athens—Lysias, Andocides, Aristotle, Diodorus, Plutarch. If I were trying to show how to *write* history, I would indeed have to assemble all the extant data and weigh the principal account, given by Xenophon, against the others. But since I am discussing how to *read* history, it would be wrong to insist on checking one historian against all the rest who have treated the same subject. Whatever a reader may know about it from before is all to the good; but, for our purpose, we presume no knowledge of any text other than the one at hand.

By taking Xenophon's story paragraph by paragraph, we can form an opinion of its value. One noticeable error, in the very first sentence, has already been mentioned; but the phrase "without ships or allies or food" turned out to be merely a verbal exaggeration which does not impair the author's real point: that the Athenians already had practically no resources left for carrying on the war. Surrender was inevitable, and we may wonder why Xenophon bothered to spell out the delays. A later historian, Diodorus, is content with one long sentence: "Their plight grew worse by the day, the city overflowed with corpses, and the survivors, after negotiations with the Lacedaemonians, concluded peace, at the price of dismantling the long fortifications and the Piraeus walls, keeping no more than ten warships, evacuating all city-states, and accepting Lacedaemonian hegemony."[7] Xenophon instead tells how the Athenians persevered for months, although it was too late to hope for even a stalemate. They could not bring themselves to surrender, because they had set an example of destroying captured cities and selling the inhabitants into slavery, and now it looked like their turn. But, so far as we know from Xenophon, they did only one thing to stave off their doom: They re-enfranchised "the citizens in bad standing." What this contributed to the war effort is not immediately evident, and Xenophon may be criticized for neglecting to interpret an action that is not self-explanatory. In the context we can perhaps guess that it was for the sake of unity within the walls, in the face of a besieging and victorious enemy. Another contemporary writer[8] says so explicitly; were we to rely wholly on Xenophon, it would be a conjecture.

The trouble with the first paragraph, then, is—not enough solid information.

[7] xiii. 107. 4.

[8] Andocides 1.73.

On the other hand, it has the great merit of showing, in a few strokes, the mental state of a people defeated and desperate but still indomitable. Xenophon moralizes here on the retribution which overtakes arrogance. Some historians avoid moralizing altogether; others practice it immoderately; Xenophon picks a time when it is dramatically appropriate. The Athenians, in their extremity, might well meditate on their sins.

In the second paragraph, as indicated above, the order of events is in part jumbled, but not so badly as to preclude straightening them out. There are other difficulties. Xenophon conveys the impression, in this paragraph and the next, that the Lacedaemonians were playing cat-and-mouse with Athens. Yet the impression is not warranted by the facts given, except those concerning Lysander. It was natural for the Athenians to apply first to Agis, who was camped right outside their city; and he was obliged to refer them to the government at Lacedaemon. He could neither accept nor reject their peace proposal; but it follows from the way the ephors behaved that they did have the power to reject it. Xenophon gives an extremely condensed report of their role. If we read it quickly, we may wrongly suppose that the ephors happened to be at the border town of Sellasia or else came there to meet the Athenian envoys. What really happened is shown by a comparison with section 19, especially the crucial words, "Thereupon the ephors *had them summoned.*" Both times that the Athenian envoys come to Sellasia, they are detained by the frontier officials, who report their arrival to the ephors in the city of Lacedaemon (also called Sparta). The ephors send back to inquire what the envoys have come to discuss. The first time, the envoys reply that they want peace, provided they can keep their fortifications. The ephors in turn order them not to proceed to Lacedaemon: negotiations are useless until the Athenians are ready to tear down ten stades of the Long Walls. A courier makes two round trips from Sellasia to Lacedaemon and back to convey these messages. His movements, being the most tedious part of the Sellasia episodes, are omitted by Xenophon, with some sacrifice of lucidity.

A more serious problem arises in section 14: "After the envoys came home and reported this to the city, dismay seized everyone. They thought that they would be sold into slavery, and that while another embassy was being sent, many would die of famine." If that were an accurate description of their reaction to the news, one might expect them to dispatch the second embassy without delay and sue for peace more abjectly than hitherto. Instead, they vote to prohibit anyone from advocating the demolition of the walls. Such a gesture of defiance is hard to reconcile with the mood of dismay which, according to Xenophon, possessed them. Possibly a large element did feel as he says they did; if so, they were certainly outvoted at the assembly. Another and by no means contradictory possibility is that the mood of dismay should be placed later, in section 19, when Theramenes returned from his fruitless parley with Lysander. At that point, the people of Athens were desperate enough to vote Theramenes and his colleagues full power to make peace as best they could.

Theramenes and Lysander are both enigmatic figures. The first act of Theramenes, however, is quite intelligible. The Athenians will not consider dismantling any walls, since they fear it would be a prelude to the destruction of the city. Theramenes undertakes to find out from Lysander whether that is the intention of the Lacedaemonians or whether they merely want to make sure that Athens can never evade any of the other peace terms. Plainly Lysander was a bigger man than King Agis and might make a commitment to the Athenians, so they thought, which would be binding upon the home government in Lacedaemon.

But it turned out, in the third paragraph, that Lysander understood the limits of his authority at least as well as

General MacArthur and took care to reassure the ephors that he had not trespassed on their prerogatives. The seemingly superfluous detail, that for a messenger he employed the Athenian exile Aristoteles, serves to explain how Xenophon, for once, obtained knowledge of an official Lacedaemonian communication. Here is one indirect sign that for this portion of his history he had only Athenian informants.

At the beginning of this paragraph, Xenophon faced a problem of a sort that keeps cropping up in historical research. What made Theramenes stay away from Athens so long, when Lysander was so close? Xenophon does not take at face value what Theramenes himself announced upon his return: "That Lysander had detained him all the while," presumably without telling him why. If for a moment we take Theramenes at his word, it might mean that Lysander contrived a cunning psychological blow at Athens—keep the people waiting for months to hear what fate is in store for them, and then frustrate their anxiety by telling them they would have to ask the ephors. Meanwhile the famine would be making them more tractable, and that was the essential part of the plan, whether its author was Theramenes or Lysander. If we now entertain Xenophon's interpretation, Theramenes thought it up; but it goes without saying that Lysander had to fall in with it. Xenophon gives no facts to support his version of the affair against Theramenes' own version. In favor of Xenophon is only the presumption that he knew Theramenes' reputation, as they were contemporaries and fellow-citizens. At any rate, no one can miss the dramatic contrast which Xenophon implies between Archestratus and Theramenes, who have the same aim but use different means with unequal success. Archestratus (in sec. 15) speaks out openly that Athens should surrender on the terms proposed by Lacedaemon and merely gets himself arrested. Theramenes dissembles and with the connivance of Lysander wears the Athenians down, "until they will consent to whatever they are told." The historian writes enough about the stubbornness of the Athenians to palliate the devious conduct of Theramenes.

The remainder of the third paragraph reads without obvious difficulties and inconsistencies. The ephors allow Theramenes and his party to proceed to Lacedaemon, because they come as plenipotentiaries.[9] What this amounted to can be deduced from the passage. Unlike the first embassy, they were not bound by any instructions—namely, to discuss an alliance with Lacedaemon on condition of retaining the walls. Instead, they were authorized to agree to any peace the Lacedaemonians might propose, but it was not valid until ratified in Athens.

The terms now stated by the Lacedaemonians were a degree more severe than before: the whole length of the Long Walls, and the Piraeus fortifications too, had to come down, and nearly all that was left of the Athenian navy had to be surrendered. From these stipulations we can sense the chief war aim of Lacedaemon: to cut Athens off from the sea. As a land power, Athens would never be formidable. The Lacedaemonians were not afraid to leave the walls of an inland city standing. But the Long Walls and the Piraeus fortifications, which made Athens virtually an invulnerable maritime city, had enabled her to defy the Lacedaemonian army for twenty-seven years. The provision on behalf of the exiles was partly to repay the services of men like Aristoteles, but no less to establish a party in Athens deeply attached to Lacedaemon, men who had been banished for opposition to the democratic government of Athens and its war policy. The final provision made Athens a *subordinate* ally of Lacedaemon. That is the meaning of the formula that the Athenians are to "treat the friends and enemies of the Lacedaemonians as their

[9] αὐτοκράτορες.

own, and follow their leadership everywhere on land and sea."

It is regrettable that Xenophon does not give the exact words of the treaty. As it stands, he may have left out some clauses that he considered minor; and others he may have garbled in paraphrasing. I will not bring in the external evidence that shows he was not wholly accurate; on internal grounds, we could suspect nothing, apart, perhaps, from the number of ships—twelve. Figures are peculiarly valuable, when they can be guaranteed; but, as a rule, the figures cited by historians, even nowadays, must be taken with reserve.

Xenophon's final paragraph is perfect as a newsreel. Now that most, though still not all, of the Athenians are eager for peace at any price, Theramenes at last dares to advocate the dismantling of the walls, as demanded by Lacedaemon. Xenophon records the acquiescence of the defeated city; but, instead of ending a sad story on a sad note, he turns to the triumphal landing of the victors. In the concluding sentence one small misinterpretation should be avoided. "Thereupon Lysander sailed into Piraeus, the exiles returned, and as flute-girls played, they demolished the walls." Who are "they"? If we parse the sentence strictly, "they" must refer to the exiles. But in both Greek and English, like many other languages, the third person plural is often used indefinitely. Probably Xenophon has in mind thousands of men from Lysander's fleet and Agis' army; and he catches their mood of satisfaction in the hour of victory. The war had gone on interminably, but they could at last say to themselves that from now on Greece would be free. The historian, however, chooses language to insinuate that they were soon to be disappointed.

The final paragraph does the author credit: it is straightforward and orderly, terse but not to the point of obscurity, and almost picturesque in its details. Earlier paragraphs, especially the second, fall considerably short of Xenophon's best, but even so are readable and—within limitations—informative, if not thought-provoking. We get an epitome rather than a rich, detailed narrative; but in this excerpt none of the omissions is so big as to leave a gaping hole in the chain of events. The author's sympathies are broad and moderate enough to enhance rather than vitiate his picture of a war between Athens and Lacedaemon. He does not write with cool objectivity, but neither can we detect any sure signs of unfairness. He lacks two attributes of a first-rate historian: rigorous accuracy and profound insight.

V

When we are reading a lengthy history, it is impractical to examine each paragraph so minutely. But if we pick out a few paragraphs near the beginning of our reading and scrutinize them so, we can surmise many characteristics of the entire work. For example, we can imagine what sort of happenings are treated in the rest of the *Hellenica.* Xenophon did not set out to tell everything he knew about Greece. His history is strictly political, concerned with the vicissitudes of city-states, their wars and their diplomacy. So much is plain from every page, although the historian does not announce it in a preface. He is not a chronicler intent on preserving a meticulous record of dates and events. His history consists of vivid, exciting, or pathetic tableaux, which follow one another rapidly, sometimes jerkily. He concentrates especially on crises when the very existence of a city-state is in jeopardy and its people stand to be obliterated. In our century such crises have come with mounting frequency and terror to nation-states; and the analogy of our age to the age of Xenophon, in spite of immense differences, can add zest to our reading of history.

CURRENT GUIDES TO EFFECTIVE COLLEGE TEACHING

Paul Klapper

DISSATISFACTION with the quality of teaching in higher education has been voiced with increasing volume. We have grown accustomed to the characterization that the quality of teaching grows progressively worse as we ascend the educational ladder from the lowest grades of the elementary school to the college and the professional school. The reactions among administrative and supervisory officers to this pedagogic circumstance are many and varied. Some seek the mercy of the court and plead *mea culpa* but give no indication of the plans for the improvement of teaching techniques; others admit the charge and ascribe the ineffectiveness of college teaching to lack of specific preparation for teaching; still others find the cause in excessive concern with research in the selection of college teachers. And there are those who cavalierly dismiss the indictment because of their conviction that higher education is essentially self-education; that the concerns of the college should, therefore, center on providing the facilities for self-development for the eager students; that the less eager students, without a compelling desire for intellectual growth, needlessly crowd college halls and take, without adequate justification, the time and the energies of the faculty. To these reactions to the charge that the quality of teaching in higher education is discouragingly low, we may add many other equally sincere and impressive explanations and rationalizations.

The cumulative effect of this repeated indictment against the quality of college and university teaching and the many explanations of probable causes may account for the many recent volumes on teaching techniques in higher education. From among these publications we shall select three which have received, with few exceptions, favorable reviews couched in soothing generalities. Two of these are of composite authorship, each by members of the sponsoring faculty;[1] the third speaks for its author alone.[2] What do these manuals of methodology offer college teachers and prospective teachers who identify teaching as a persistent and continuing intellectual stimulation that has its roots in *what* is taught, *why* it is taught, *how* it is taught, and by *whom* it is taught?

The two compilations, one edited by Harold Taylor, president of Sarah Lawrence College, and the other by Bernice B. Cronkhite, dean of Radcliffe Graduate School, naturally present a variety of attitudes, impressions, and procedures, but there is no underlying set of values which would unify the contributions of the several authors. There is no profound synthesis of the process under discussion. In neither book is there a sequence governed by the logic of the problem, nor are there forward and backward references to discussions that follow or precede the exposition by a particular contributor. Because repetitions are not planned, they are not progressive and therefore do not enrich the discussion by

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[1] Harold Taylor (ed.), *Essays on Teaching* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1950); Bernice B. Cronkhite (ed.), *A Handbook for College Teachers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950).

[2] Gilbert Highet, *The Art of Teaching* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950).

deeper insights and new applications. Thus the characteristic weakness of publications of multiple authorship has not been avoided.

Essays on Teaching is not dogmatic. It offers no bag of pedagogic tricks. Each contributor presents his problems and invites his readers to share them with him, to join him in quest of educative practices that promise helpful solutions. These essays give teachers a reasonably clear indication of the area of the problem and where to apply their thinking. The editor and his associates recognize the simple fact that the besetting sin in teaching stems not from failure to arrive at a resolution of its problems—a utopian hope, at best—but rather from failure to recognize the problems and to direct all energies toward understanding them because in this understanding lies the possibility of solution.

A Handbook for College Teachers, produced by members of the faculties of Radcliffe College and Harvard University, is surprisingly arid. Here and there one finds an occasional oasis which might appear even less green in more fertile terrain. A disheartening number of the contributions are thin and lack even the virtue of transparency. One cannot avoid the suspicion that their authors made too low an appraisal of the auditors to whom they lectured. On what other basis can one explain such advice as the following?

> The clumsy constructions, the grammatical faults, the faulty references, you will, of course, endeavor earnestly to avoid.

The author of the chapter "Teaching the Humanities" begins:

> When I look at the impressive array of titles in this book and when I think, by contrast, of the topic I have been assigned, I experience a feeling of frustration. No chance for me to deal with profound ideas or with the philosophy of education.

Are graduate students preparing for college teaching in need of such advice as this?

> Do not try to dazzle them, try to help them. Give them only what is essential. Tell them that, if they want more, you are ready to supply it . . . never repeat in your lectures exactly what your students will find in their handbooks. . . .

Not even the most slavish disciple of the Great Peripatetic ever systematized and circumscribed his walking to the degree that is recommended in the following paragraph:

> Finally, at times you can very well use some harmless "histrionics." . . . Suppose you are standing in front of your audience and you have in your lecture three very distinct parts. Why not for the first paragraph, stand slightly on the left of your desk, quite naturally, and when the moment comes, say, "Well, now, so much for the first point" and then move gracefully to the right, and proceed with your second point? And when you reach your climax, I mean your conclusion, you go back to the center of the desk!

Another contributor seems to imply that college teachers are to be recruited from the ranks of the athletic and histrionically gifted:

> More positively, the teacher ought to be dramatic. Remember that people listen with their eyes. . . . Don't be afraid to be dramatic. Be dramatic to the extent of being memorably dramatic. . . . Vigorous health, good posture, poise, dramatic action, individuality and sovereignty of bearing will do much to effect this dominating influence. . . . Even so, however, if you are to maximize your personality as a teacher, you will require skillful vocal technique.

Implicit in the belief that a sense of humor is part of the priceless equipment of a teacher is the obvious restriction to genuine humor whose sophistication sharpens an idea. Humor that lacks this quality clutters teaching and robs it of dignity. The humor introduced in some of these chapters detracts from the respect with which a reader naturally approaches a book whose contributors include, among others, such scholars as Ivor A. Richards, Gordon W. Allport, Howard Mumford Jones, and Robert Ulich.

One seeks in vain, in these pages, an illustration of teaching that is an experience in purposeful and rigorous thinking. Even the lecture as a means of teaching may approximate this obvious requirement when used discriminatingly by an effective teacher. But here one finds repeatedly that the lecture is more closely related to histrionics than to disciplined pursuit of knowledge. For illustration, we quote:

> By observing the attentiveness of the class [during a lecture] you can tell which method of delivery is indicated, whether the "fire-hose focus" or the "park-spray spread." . . . If you observe a local lack of attention in five or six students . . . you will do well to concentrate there [i.e., use the fire-hose focus] . . . or if a student in the seventh row left is drifting into an uneasy slumber, you might beneficially focus on him unless, of course, your sympathy prevents. If there is general attention throughout the class and all is going well, you will probably direct your communication with a more general coverage.

A Handbook for College Teachers is a collection of lectures and rarely strays from the lecture as a means of teaching. Even more disturbing than this preoccupation with lecturing is the absence of penetrating analysis of planned discussion as a mode of teaching. Nothing in the pages of this book is even faintly reminiscent of Socrates and his dedication to the destruction of misconceptions which befog the minds of men. Again and again we read the equivalent of such appraisal of lecturing as: "Lectures will play an important part in your teaching. Their advantages are obvious. In no other way can you, at one time, transmit so much to so many with such effectiveness, as through speech. . . . The notes from which you lecture will be your indispensable major aid." Another contributor says early in his discourse: "So what I hope to put before you is simply how to *prepare*, how to *organize*, and how to *deliver* a lecture in a classroom, especially in the field of humanities." The reader will seek in vain for a helpful discussion of such basic questions as when to lecture and when *not* to lecture; what the weaknesses of lecturing are as a sustained method of teaching; whether we can transmit knowledge from person to person even as we transmit a coin. In closing his talk on "Teaching the Social Sciences," the lecturer recalls an important bit of advice which an older colleague gave him during his novitiate: "I remember when I first went in as a guest lecturer in ——. Professor —— urged me to walk a good two miles during the hour."

This handbook for college teachers is not without its valuable chapters, but these are unfortunately few and far between. It was probably conceived as a bread-and-butter aid to inexperienced and discouraged teachers; it will yield, at best, a dry, unbuttered crust. It is meager sustenance for those whose conception of teaching runs deeper than cajoling reluctant students or capturing the short-lived attention of disinterested, immature students.

Highet's *Art of Teaching* is a gentle treatment of a difficult art. It reads easily and pleasantly and is clearly the work of a scholar whose satisfaction derives as much from an understanding relationship with young people as from his mastery of his subject. It is an inspirational book and will appeal to those who find college teaching a rewarding, even though not a remunerative, profession.

But teaching is rarely a gentle process. The reason lies in its primary purpose: to quicken learning and thus substitute disciplined for undisciplined behavior. Acquisition of knowledge, the development of new skills, the refinement of moral and aesthetic judgments—these are the outcomes of effective teaching. These outcomes have their origin in the student's recognition of his specific inadequacies and his consequent eager and sustained effort toward the achievement of a set of objectives. Successful learning is satisfying, but an impressive price must be paid for that satisfaction.

Professor Highet has much to say about how to lecture but little about when not to lecture. There is, at best, only passing concern with modes of teaching that rely on a more active interplay of minds upon minds than is likely to occur during a lecture. One searches in vain for a reasonably adequate exposition of teaching through discussions for which teacher and students have made ample preparation. One seeks in vain for appraisal of teaching through tutorial readings which are designed to strengthen a student's weaknesses, to fill in the empty spaces that often lie between scheduled courses, or to give substance to his individual interests. One looks in vain for discussion of teaching through supervised field work and appropriate research projects, which are very frequently the necessary supplements to class activities and lectures.

What is needed today is a treatment of college and university teaching that is rooted deep in a meaningful philosophy of education. There may then emerge an intellectual design for a curriculum, a respectable and therefore respected methodology of instruction, and, finally, worthy standards by which to appraise student attainments. Without such a credo, a faculty consists of scholars, each doing his work in his own way; with it, a faculty gradually emerges as a fraternity of co-operating scholars working together toward clearly defined ends. Without it, the technique of instruction is merely the practice of each individual.

Learning is a form of living, intellectually and emotionally, in the hope of quickening the process of self-realization. Since no one can live for another, each must do his own living and learning. Teaching, explained Pestalozzi, is at best a "benevolent superintendence" of that living, in which the teacher stimulates, counsels, encourages, and appraises but in which the student must ever be the active and vigorous agent in the learning process. Interest and motivation are significant elements in the teacher's techniques only when interest is regarded as an active attitude toward experience and motivation as the spring that releases effort toward sanctioned goals.

However skilful, teaching is but one factor in the total educative process assigned to the classroom. Its influence increases or diminishes in direct measure to the wisdom which dictates what experiences to teach, why to teach them, how to teach them, and, of course, who should teach them. Sound methodology has its origin in the disciplines which constitute the curriculum; in the purposes to be achieved by the co-operative quest of students and teachers; in the personality and professional competence of the teacher; in the generally accepted conclusions of the psychology of learning; and, above all, in the design of the life and aspirations of a democratic society which supports higher education. Aside from these associated circumstances, methods of teaching are the arbitrary practices imposed upon maturing students. Any discussion of the art or the techniques of teaching which develops independently of these governing conditions is destined to yield a hollow form, fatally divorced from substance. Here lies the crucial weakness of these and other books on teaching—they ascribe by persistent implication the influence of the whole of teaching and learning to the *how*, only one of the factors in this complicated process.

Because learning is a process of purposeful living, it has all the organic interrelations of a living entity. Hence the curriculum, too, loses its true meaning when considered as a segregated agent in education. Courses of study, curriculums, are born of sustained travail. They are conceived, first, in terms of large units of information and skills. These units are then broken down into constituent smaller units and set forth in a logical organization in which time and space indicate an intended hierarchy of values.

Curriculums, therefore, address themselves to the question of *what* to teach. But, without a parallel consideration of *why* and *how*, curriculums are classified segments of knowledge and lists of skills, all ruthlessly torn from a living whole. In this isolation, curriculums mean all things to all teachers and, therefore, nothing real to any particular teacher. In destroying their organic interrelationship with *why*, *how*, and *who*, we reduce curriculums to inert compilations of facts that have lost most of their intended meaning. Under such conditions a curriculum or course of study in history has no deeper meaning than, say, a table of contents of a significant historical text. It merely stakes out the boundaries of a teacher's legitimate claim to the time and the effort of his students. Add an adequate exposition of the *why* of that curriculum, that is, of the purposes which its content is to serve and its relation to the total design of the college course, and at once teacher and students have working instruments by which they can select subject matter intelligently and assign relative values by principle rather than by personal preference or, worse, by the prejudices of the day or the locality.

To the *what* and the *why* must now be added the *how*, the peculiarly appropriate means of attaining the objectives of the suggested subject matter. There must be an indication of the enrichment which the teacher is to add through lectures, if any; what the students are to derive from their readings; and most important, perhaps, what clarification both students and teacher together will achieve through discussion of fundamental questions.

The curriculum that a faculty finally adopts should be a helpful manual of procedure for students as well as teachers. Here both should find, in simple exposition, clear answers to such questions as these: Are the students to write papers? How many during the semester? On what kind of questions or subjects? What ends are to be served by these written expositions? What tutorial aid may the students expect during the writing of the papers and from the conference which follows the completion of the assignment? What class discussions may reasonably be expected to stem from these personal conferences?

To attain its educational values, the curriculum should indicate the types of thinking that may be clearly identified in the material to be read, analyzed, and appraised. To illustrate: What are instances of reasoning by analogy? Of reasoning from cause to effect and from effect to cause? Of mistaking a sequence for a consequence? Of stretching a point to make a point? Of a judgment colored by an author's characteristic point of view? Of an inconsistency in a line of thought? Of thinking that does not stray from proved facts? Of old evidence which is impressively challenged by new data? Of inferences, both legitimate and unwarranted, which may be made from a reasonably detailed map? Of judging the character of a historic figure by what he does, by what he says, and by what is said about him? Little by little, students will perceive for themselves that, even if history does not repeat itself, learning it leads to the mastery of subject matter and of disciplines which are susceptible of a wide variety of application; that, so learned, history is truly a study of the present through the past because we quicken our understanding of what is by our insight into how it became. History, so conceived, becomes a complex of disciplines which are vital for contemporary thought. Without these controlling disciplines, students and teacher in a history class are engaged in disinterring the dead past, only to rebury it.

An introductory course of study in college mathematics may be specific, wise, and promising in the selection, gradation, and organization of its subject matter. Unless that course of study indicates, first, the objectives sought by those who

framed it and, second, the teaching practices that are likely to achieve those objectives, it will probably be no better guide to teachers and students than the assigned textbook. Such a syllabus that addresses itself solely to what to teach makes of mathematics a succession of manipulations whose origin students rarely perceive. But college students taught by a teacher whose sympathetic understanding of their bewilderments has been quickened by a curriculum that stresses *why* and *how* as well as *what* to teach will discern in their introductory course a kind of thinking which leads to inescapable conclusions because of the precision with which basic ideas are defined, employed, and then put to the test. Even though these students may not add a second course in mathematics to their schedules, they are likely to sustain that genuine appreciation of its disciplines which they acquired in their first active contact with the subject. Such teaching makes of mathematics a liberalizing study even to those young people whose controlling interests lie closer to the humanities or the social sciences than to the physical sciences.

A curriculum that emerges from clearly perceived purpose and derives from well-defined methodology is happily received by college instructors who willingly make teaching a primary concern. And for effective teaching we set down these essentials: mellowing scholarship, deepening insight into the discipline of one's specialty, and growing understanding of the ways of learning and teaching. He who gives himself wholly to research in his field of special competence usually increases the materials to be taught but frequently begrudges the time and effort required for stimulating teaching. He who has neither the call nor the gift to carry on research by working on the frontiers of knowledge may nevertheless maintain scholarship that is rich in understanding of both current developments and past achievements. What we ask of both kinds of scholars is a scholar's concern with the techniques of instruction. Here, again, there is an organic integrity in the preparation for teaching which does not permit of either a dichotomy or an exclusive loyalty to one of the constituent elements of the teacher's art.

LANGUAGE IN A FEW WORDS*

Eric P. Hamp

I

THE fundamental aim of scholarship is to advance knowledge. For this purpose it is necessary for the specialist to make use of terms and methods some of which are technically very complex. But the fruits of scholarship will be barren indeed, if from time to time they are not made intelligible to educated men at large in such a form that the nonspecialist may increase his understanding without being expected to retrace all the steps laboriously trodden in the first place by the specialist. There are not today very many people who can themselves manipulate the equations of the nuclear physicists. Yet, since the days of the Smythe Report, a sizable segment of the intelligent public has become acquainted with the basic concepts and assumptions underlying this branch of science.

The fact that there is no comparable understanding of the advance of knowledge of such a familiar phenomenon as language seems hard to understand. Recent, but quite fundamental, findings concerning language have scarcely emerged from the snug covers of learned journals, indigestible dissertations, and formidable monographs concerned with elusive minutiae. From time to time attempts are made to quicken the body; yet they all have failed. Think, for example, of the expert who starts with remarks to the effect that language is usually thought to be a dull subject and then gets no further than promising to inspect a few of the fascinating byways of this "absorbing discipline," as he proceeds to unfurl tiresome, and often irrelevant, periphrastic expressions of the passive voice in English or Eskimo. Then there is the bombardier who opens a barrage of countless languages or the museum director who sets out to guide you through a picture gallery of languages. "Just look at all those words that resemble one another," says he. The intelligent reader, who is probably plagued every day with sufficient chaos of detail, is by now reaching for the string on the bed lamp.

Another subject concerned with language has come to the fore in recent years, an ingredient that in many ways only beclouds the issue precisely because of its validity as a province of knowledge in its own right, namely, that worrisome and sometimes popular topic, semantics. Semantics certainly has its proper place in any consideration of human communication; it is unfortunate that at present both controls and methods for observing and sifting semantic data are embarrassingly undeveloped. Just how are we to draw the lines defining how people "feel" about the connotations of linguistic expression? And to say—what seems to be a widespread notion—that when we have dealt with semantics we have explained a basic portion of the nature of language is simply not true.

Under the rubric of semantics there is also the question of the expression that logical categories and functions find in

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language. But, as long as discussion is restricted to these considerations of logic, the crucial question of language remains untouched. Languages are garments that clothe and enhance, or at times detract from, what we assume to be the mental processes of human beings. To use a gross simile, a tailor who restricts his study to anatomy will not learn what a good suit of clothes consists of; the success of Christian Dior does not rest on mere measurements of the configurations shared by all women. And, like good Chinese *couture,* the waist of a Paris mode in a given year has no necessary relationship to that slender middle part of a woman's body that finds quite different expression in the terms of a physical anthropologist or of the average man with an eye for beauty. Let me illustrate this with two English sentences: *There is no democracy where there is ruthless subjection of the peace-loving masses by the few* and *There are no whelps in that pigsty.* The first statement offers certain difficulties which it would be highly desirable to define. With the aid, if necessary, of an expert in animal husbandry, the second statement offers no problems at all of the same order.

Now if the equivalent of the first statement were found in *Pravda,* it might be alleged that the form for "subjection" has a different coverage in the realm of ideas from that usually found, for example, in the *New York Times.* But that does not prevent the *Pravda* version from occurring in English in the *Daily Worker.* An analysis of this discrepancy does not necessarily tell us anything about the difference between the Russian *language* and English. On the other hand, among the various *linguistic* differences which we should find in the two versions would be the absence of any feature in the Russian to express our English form *the.* This does not mean that a Russian is unaware of such a distinction; in a given instance we can know nothing about such an alleged awareness, since we cannot crawl into his mind to find out. The important *linguistic* fact is that Russian simply puts a speaker under no compulsion to express this distinction at every turn, just as we do not have to change the form of a noun after a negative verb (a Russian does).

Now let us regard these statements from the point of view of language. Both are statements in English, and both have essentially the same structure. That is to say, both make use of a great many of the same fundamental building blocks and also put them together in similar patterns. To point out a few characteristic English features, we notice that there are certain units of sound which occur in these statements: voiced *th* in *there,* voiceless *th* in *ruthless;* a voiceless rush of breath through the lips (if you speak one of certain forms of Standard English other than my own) for the *wh* of *whelps.* Unless you grew up speaking a language other than English, you can detect an audible rush of breath immediately after the *p* in *peace;* this does not occur after *p* in *whelps.* We find combinations of sounds such as *th* (*ruthless*), *bj* (*subjection*), *lps* (*whelps*), *gst* (*pigsty*); we shall never find these at the beginning of an English word, as we may with *fy* in *few* (contrast *feud* and *food*).

I have picked out a few striking phonological features of English. Among European languages, phonological systems that use two *th*-sounds are found only in Welsh, Greek, Icelandic, and Albanian; Castilian Spanish has the voiceless *th* (I am, of course, referring throughout to *sounds,* and not spelling, which is merely an imperfect and often, as in the case of English, a grossly inadequate symbolism). The *wh* as a *significant contrast* (note, for example, *which* beside *witch*) is shared by no other standard European language.

Now when we say "significant contrast," we have struck at the heart of sound-systems in language. Certain other linguistic groups can be heard to pronounce our *wh,* but for them it may be

simply a nonsignificant variation of one of their sound units. Manx, the language of the Isle of Man and now practically extinct, employed the voiced *th* sound in the middle of a word between vowels. This was, however, not a distinctive sound, since it varied from time to time and from person to person with *z* in the selfsame forms. In other words, it made no difference to a Manxman which of these two sounds he produced in that position. If we say the word *peace* immediately after we have taken a drink of water (opening our vocal chords with a snap), we are likely to produce what a phonetician would call a "glottalized" *p*. That will not bother us at all (so long as the water went down the right way), since this is not a significant distinction in our language. Tzeltal speakers in southern Mexico might be misunderstood in a similar circumstance. *Their* sound-pattern is such that they distinguish glottalized consonants clearly and significantly from the nonglottalized variety. To us such consonants merely sound "funny." This sort of inattention to sounds which are not significant in the language of the observer is one of the principal inadequacies of the earlier grammars written by Europeans of so-called "primitive" languages.

It is probable that no speaker produces precisely the same acoustical sound twice in succession. As yet, no absolute phonetic criteria have been established on an acoustic basis.

All the illustrations which we have just noticed have the point in common that in a given position one sound unit of a language may occur indiscriminately with varying qualities, as measured either in terms of physiological production or of the acoustic result which the observer hears; *within a limited range,* no matter what sound occurs, the result is still perfectly intelligible to a native speaker. Not only is it quite intelligible, it doesn't even sound the least bit "funny." To put the point another way, the interior economy of the linguistic pattern is not disturbed by these variations. It would appear that sounds are "pigeonholed" and associated by the hearer by means of a complex psychological process not yet understood by competent investigators. When we have to deal with different languages, the criterion of intelligibility, or of contrast within the sound-pattern, is contained in the fact that for different "sounds" different linguistic groups have varying ranges of tolerance. We may call the haphazard occurrence of an articulatory complex or "sound" within this range of tolerance in a given language FREE VARIATION.

To return to the *th* sounds found in European languages, it was noted above that, whereas various linguistic groups of Europe boasted both voiced and voiceless *th*'s, Spanish has only the voiceless variety. Anyone who knows Spanish will no doubt have already remarked that you can hear voiced *th*'s in great number in many dialects of Spanish. Although this is true as a phonetic or, if you will, acoustical fact, this phenomenon has no significance for the present-day patterning of the language. For, if our Spanish-speaking reader will think again, he will realize that he has never heard a clear *d*, in which the breath is stopped as it is in the English *d*, in the middle or at the end of a word in such Spanish dialects in positions where this voiced *th* sound occurs. In other words, in standard Spanish we have one sound unit *d*, which in initial position sounds to us like a *d* but, in most positions, medially and finally sounds to us like a voiced *th*.[1] Let us now look at English along the same lines as an Oregon Takelma Indian might. He would notice that English has a breathed *p* initially in words such as our word *peace* noted above; an unbreathed *p* in words such as *spit* or *span;* an unexploded *p* very often in a word like *cup*, where, once they

[1] Plus a unit *th*, which is generally voiceless, but which gets voiced to a different sort of *th* in certain combinations (e.g., *hazlo*, "do it!").

have been closed, the lips are not opened until the next sound is produced; and a "glottalized" *p*, as when a Scotsman snaps his vocal chords after he has puffed a *p* with his lips.

We have found, now, that certain acoustic features occur in a given language only in certain positions and environments. If we tabulate all acoustic differences for any language, we shall discover whole categories of sounds whose members may vary enormously within a category, in their phonetic or absolute acoustic quality, but never occur in the same environment. To put it another way, they never offer a distinctive contrast; they are environmentally conditioned. By grouping these mutually exclusive sounds together, we arrive at the significant sound units of the language which we are inspecting. As is not surprising, these units, most conveniently so grouped, turn out to share a goodly number of phonetic, or acoustic, features. Linguists call a "bundle" of such mutually exclusive sounds a PHONEME. We are then in a position to say that English, for example, has such-and-such phonemes, including the phoneme *p*, which, in turn, has such-and-such positional variants in the stated environments—and then we must enumerate the various positional phonetic values that *p* has in all the environments in which it may occur, some of which we took note of above. It does not surprise us that all these variants of *p* share the feature of double-lip closure. The reason we must go through this lengthy procedure to arrive at a statement which no doubt seems quite obvious to any speaker of English is that different linguistic groups, as pointed out above, have very different habits as to what constitutes a significant contrast.

When we say above that phonemes have varying values in all positions in which they *may* occur, we have implied a limitation on the number of combinations or clusters of phonemes that may be found in a given language. This brings us to another fundamental feature of the interior economy or patterning that is found in all languages. Everybody, including radio announcers, found out during the war that Russians not only give their babies and cities unconscionably long names but also do their best to make them unpronounceable. One might recall Pskov, Dniepropetrovsk, or the late Mr. Zhdanov as a few random examples. In the way of everyday words the Russians produce with ease such specimens as *vstrechátsya,* "to meet one another"; *vverkhú,* "upstairs"; *éto ne mne nrávitsya,* "I don't like that." Georgian, "Uncle Joe's" native language (not at all related to Russian), furnishes us with a verb *vhmtsqsi,* "I pasture my flock" (the sounds I write as *ts* and *q* here involve features difficult to explain briefly to an English speaker). Albanians find no trouble with *mpshtiell,* "to wrap"; nor do the Czechs with *čtvrt,* "one quarter" (the *r* is here vocalic). Examples can be multiplied indefinitely. The thing that strikes us forcibly, as English speakers, is the "outrageousness" of some of the combinations that these languages permit, particularly in the case of initial consonant clusters, which always seem to be more noticeable. These clusters, although employing individual sound units or phonemes many of which are not at all foreign to us, involve combinations which we in our language do not happen to permit. In isolation, every sound in the above Albanian word occurs in English; *sh* represents the first sound in our word "show," and the whole word rimes with *peal.* But, to look at English from a Russian point of view, one finds equally inconceivable clusters in such words as "six*ths*," "be*tw*ixt," or even the diphthong in our word *know* (Russian has practically no diphthongs; we have scarcely any nondiphthongized long syllables).

Every language has a clear-cut pattern in the combinations which it will or will not employ. It so happens that in some languages the range of permitted clusters is much greater than for others.

In the matter of consonants, for example, permitted clusters in Japanese and Malay are extremely restricted; in the Bannack Shoshone (American Indian) language, only one consonant occurs in clusters with others. Many Bantu languages (spoken over enormous areas of Africa roughly south of the Equator), on the other hand, reject many clusters which seem quite reasonable to us, yet employ other combinations which we regard as singular, to say the least. That is the main reason that the names of the beplumed chieftains who arrive in London for conferences seem so incongruous to us. In turn, the patterning of "pidgin" languages encountered by many Americans, for example, in the South Pacific during the recent war, is to a large extent accounted for by the fact that English patterning seemed "funny" to those people; so they, as we do in everyday speech with Russian names, "tidied up" our language for us and made it look like something civilized.

The story has presumably been the same as long as men have been talking. We read in Tacitus (*Hist.* ii. 22) that the Romans, whose language many of us in the classroom have not always regarded with unqualified approval, found some of our Germanic forebears on the banks of the Rhine singing "harsh songs." One need go no farther than the pages of *King Henry V* to find out what Englishmen have thought about the patterning of Welsh.

The usual statements made about other people's languages are almost universally based on a misconception of this phonological patterning. German is regularly referred to as a "guttural" language. What has really been noticed by such an observer is the presence of a pattern strikingly different from English (such combinations as *shl, tst, mt* in forms like *schlange, jetzt, amt*) and the use of *one* phoneme in particular (*ch*) which sounds bizarre to English ears. Many have the mistaken impression that good standard German is produced by a liberal seasoning with *ch*'s. But the *ch* actually has two distinct positional variants in forms such as *doch* and *nicht;* in the latter type, that is, after a front vowel, the *ch* more closely approximates our English *sh*, where the closure is surely far removed from the throat. In short, "guttural" seems to refer in a vague, impressionistic fashion to real phenomena, but as a scientific term it is misleading and meaningless. When Italian is referred to as a "singing" or "lilting" language, presumably what has been noticed is the prominent vocalic pattern, the falling pitch on stressed syllables, a more restricted pattern (than in English) for consonant clusters, and the presence of doubled consonants (that is consonants held for twice their normal length), e.g., in *fratello, madonna, fato,* "fate," but *fatto* "deed." We tend particularly to notice the last feature, because English has no double consonants, except when chance brings two forms together, e.g., *night-table;* the difference between *later* and *latter* is not in the consonants; it is the vowels spelled *a*.

In the course of defining our sound units, or phonemes, it was pointed out that the deciding factor is the feature of significant contrast. There are many languages in the world which employ tone, or relative pitch of the voice, as the sole feature of contrast between many forms. Chinese is the language most familiar to Westerners which displays this characteristic. Since we do not use such features to distinguish individual words, the whole concept is somewhat strange to us; that is, it is outside our phonological pattern, and, just as in the case of glottalized consonants, whispered vowels, clicks, and the like, it is hard for us to hear these distinctions. To be sure, we make use of pitch in one fashion over long segments of speech, as when we use a rising inflection to denote an attitude of doubt or inconclusiveness, or over shorter segments to give semantically vague subjective overtones to an expression (e.g., *well, ah, yes*). But these are

features of a different order. Tone in Chinese distinguishes one item of vocabulary from another; we may say it has a "lexical" value (i.e., the dictionary must show it). In Ibo, a language spoken in West Africa, a verb is made negative merely by changing the tone. In Mazatec, a language spoken in southern Mexico, a change in the subject of the verb often involves a change in tone. We may say that tone here has a grammatical value; it is as much a part of the grammar as is the change in endings on a Latin verb or the addition of an ending to an English noun to make it plural. These features are certainly elements of phonemic contrast.

All language flows within a framework of time. I cannot utter an expression, however short, without finishing later than I began it. The sound contrasts which were discussed when we set up such phonemes as *p* are linear segments in a continuum of time; that is, they are distinctive features that occur one after the other (roughly speaking; this is imprecise in strict acoustic terms). These we may call "segmental" or "linear" phonemes. We have seen, however, that we must also take into account such things as tone. Now tone (in languages I know of) never occupies an interval of time when nothing else, equally distinctive, is going on, and sometimes overlaps several segmental phonemes. Tone, therefore, might be called a "simultaneous" phoneme. Stress, such as we employ in English, where one syllable of most words is spoken more forcibly than another, is also an example of a simultaneous phoneme. Once again, the occurrence of a feature may not mean that it is significant; Czech has a marked stress accent, but it always occurs on the initial syllable of the word. Therefore, it never offers a contrast and hence is not a phoneme in Czech.

We have now established another fundamental feature of language: that we do not necessarily have to slice time laterally in order to find all significant sound contrasts.

We see, therefore, that one of the fundamental things that gives any language its own particular quality is its rigid adherence to a closed pattern of sound units, which permits variation only within strikingly limited ranges of tolerance. From the enormous number of sounds the human organism can produce, every language selects a surprisingly limited stock. All languages thus far adequately described employ phonemes numbering roughly between twenty and fifty. Indeed, there is reason to suspect the validity of an analysis that yields a number of phonemes in the upper span of this range, though as yet there is no reason to assume any absolute number as a ceiling. These units are then combined in well-defined patterns, much like chessmen on a board. To break the rule is to sacrifice intelligibility.

We have now not only considered structural patterning of the sound units of languages; we have also taken a brief glance at some of the ways whereby we may discover these units. When we do this, how do we know that we have arrived at a valid or "right" analysis? How does the physicist know he has a valid analysis when he posits subatomic particles which he has not yet seen or measured? The criterion for "rightness" in matters of analysis and description is empirically faithful economy. The best description is that which explains all observed phenomena with a minimum of assumptions and statements. The best description of a language is the most economical description.

II

Up to this point we have been talking exclusively about the sounds of languages. But the chief use of language is to communicate meaning. The sounds have no intrinsic meaning of their own; they are merely the smallest contrasted units that can be isolated in the stream of speech. They may be likened to bricks which, though each has its own color,

consistency, and character, may be put together to build a wall, a sewer, a well, or even a statue. But what of the resultant meaningful combinations of these linguistic bricks? The question sometimes arises, when we put a hyphen between two forms, whether the result is one word or two. This demands, in the first place, a definition of a "word." We usually regard *light* as a word, and similarly *house*. One supposes that *lighthouse* is also a word; we seem so sure of this that we write the two parts together. On the other hand, we seem equally sure that a *light house* is two words. The criterion would seem to be whether you write them together or leave a space between. If this space between the two words is valid, then it should correspond to something in our stream of speech. Certainly this blank space becomes a tenuous quantity when we say *a light house* in rapid speech. We must search for something else more capable of measurement.

We found that one of our linguistic bricks in English is the phoneme of strong stress. Now we have a real distinction. In *lighthouse, light* receives a strong stress accent, whereas *house* receives less stress; in *light house* both forms may receive strong stress. That seems to answer the question: an English word can be defined as a segment of speech which bears only one loud stress.

We have been able to make a statement describing an English word, but we are interested in language in general. When we use the same technique with French (nonvulgar Parisian), a different situation develops. In French stress is not a phoneme; in fact, French stress is extremely weak, and the feature which occurs simultaneously with this weak stress, a rising tone inflection, is by far the more predominant. The French stress-tone feature occurs automatically on the last syllable of all phrase-groups; for this reason it never serves as a feature of contrast and hence is not phonemic. We are, therefore, deprived of this criterion in an attempt to isolate words in the expression *je ne l'ai pas fait.* Or, on the other hand, we must say that a French word equals a phrase-group, however long. There is naturally nothing wrong with such a statement, except for the fact that we have now merely renamed something we had already isolated. But we had set out to find some more manageable, more "minimal," unit. If we were to proceed from language to language, we should find similar obstacles in our way whenever we attempted to establish a general criterion for defining a "word." It will be remembered that the criteria established for recognizing a phoneme can be stated in such a way as to apply to any language. It is precisely such general features and criteria which are necessary for an understanding of the nature of language as such. But if our observations and analysis are correct, wherever we do not find such general criteria we are presumably faced with phenomena which are not universal characteristics of language. A "word," then, as we know it, is not a universal phenomenon.

A stream of speech consists of a succession not only of units of sound but also of units which convey meaning to the speakers of the language. How do we know they contain meaning, and how can we test for meaning? The only way we can test with absolute assurance is by collecting large quantities of specimens of continuous speech from a speaker of a given language.

As we collect our specimens from the speaker, we also find out what his utterances mean. As we collect more and more specimens we find increasingly large numbers of segments of varying lengths that differ only by small fractions: *the house, the red house, the big red house, the big red house where my brother lives, my sister's big red book,* and so on. These expressions, your native from New York informs you, mean different things in his language. Putting these segments side by side in all possible combinations, we can isolate minimum segments of meaning by finding

pairs that differ by one feature only. The value of this simple technique is the fact that it can be applied to any language. Linguists call these segments MORPHEMES.

Such morphemes may turn out to contain any number of phonemes, as few as one. In the word *zone* or *ozone* the *z* is merely a phoneme; it means nothing of itself; it is merely the feature of contrast, without unitary meaning, between, e.g., *zone, bone,* and *loan.* This observation is substantiated by the fact that the remaining segment *-one* in these words has no common feature of meaning. The *z* which we hear at the end of the word *boys* is likewise a phoneme, but it is at the same time a morpheme because it is the sole feature by which we distinguish this plural form from a singular *boy* and because it occurs affixed to hosts of other English forms (*maid, leg, valley, train*), always with the same meaning, viz., "more than one."

Just as morphemes are built up from phonemes, we next observe that all longer segments of language are built up from morphemes. These are the two basic units of all languages; in fact, these are at present the only basic units that may safely be posited for all languages. With these units, grammars and dictionaries for every known language can be compiled.

There is reason to believe, with certain reservations, that morphemes can be extracted on a still more objective basis. If we had an immense amount of English text all transcribed in phonemes, we would find the combination *ksθbr,*[2] which occurs in such segments as "six*th* *b*rick" or "six*th* *b*ridge," extremely rare in occurrence. Such frequencies could be computed by tabulating clusters of phonemes in a running text one at a time, two at a time, . . . *n* at a time. One *might* find a discrete break in the frequency curve between sequences that mean something and clusters of the type just cited. In other words, morphemes are bound to recur with some degree of frequency in a language because people normally intend to make sense. Clusters such as the last-mentioned occur only as random results of the juxtaposition of morphemes.

This approach is a purely theoretical matter. It illustrates, however, by the hypotheses underlying it, two fundamental characteristics of language: first, the strikingly mechanical way in which linguistic structures behave and, second, the vast gulf, from a descriptive point of view, that lies between language as a structure and the semantic content which this structure conveys.

Just as in the case of phonemes, so we find that linguistic patterns emerge again on the morpheme level. One of the striking characteristics of phonemes is the fact that languages restrict themselves to a very limited stock. This is not quite so true in the case of morphemes. All languages make use of immensely larger numbers of morphemes than of phonemes. Though most speakers actively employ only a small fraction of the total roster and passively understand or recognize a somewhat larger number, the total stock of morphemes in a given language at a given time runs well into the thousands. This number, moreover, cannot be fixed with exactitude, that is to say, the "aproximate exactitude" that we were able to state for phonemes. Even if we could suppose that it were possible to collect all English morphemes in use on a given day, the number is subject to change the next day—for instance, on those days on which *simonize, bowdlerize, chauvinism, GI,* or *jilet,* which is Turkish for "safety razor," first came into use. In this fashion it is apparent that an exact ceiling cannot be presumed for the number of morphemes in a language. There is a very good reason for this: morphemes, unlike phonemes, have meaning, and the world of experience is vast and can be catalogued endlessly;

[2] *θ* represents the *th*-sound in a word like *thing* (*θɪŋ*).

for that is precisely what speakers set out to do with their morphemes.

If that is so, why don't languages have an infinite number of morphemes? Obviously because no one could remember or use them all, and communication would be impaired. Even though the numerical ceiling is hazy, the prominent linguistic feature of selection once again asserts itself. But how, with a limited number of units, can men set out to catalogue the universe? Primarily by two methods: omission and combination. We shall take up the second of these first, since it leads us back to a statement which we seem in some degree to have vitiated. It was implied above that there are parallels between the roles of phonemes and those of morphemes. By operating with limited, but still fairly large, numbers of morphemes, languages combine these units according to rigidly enforced patterns. Just as phoneme clusters are strictly regulated, so the order of morphemes in a given language is closely policed. In English we may not tack our plural endings onto the beginning of nouns (*zboy* does not occur); *John hits Bill* and *Bill hits John* both occur, but mean different things. Within the framework of these patterns, combinations are made of varying numbers of morphemes so that the "covering power" of the original number of units is vastly increased. These combinations may involve morphemes which can be found alone in other contexts; for example, in German one combines *Hand* and *Schuh* to make *Handschuh,* that is, a "glove." Some morphemes are never found standing alone, such as the plural *-z* in *boys* or the unstressed *the* in *the house.*

It is convenient to give a name to those forms which may stand alone (for example, in a brief answer to a question); we therefore call *Hand, Schuh,* and *Handschuh* "free forms"; *fish, gold, boy, goldfish,* and *boys* are likewise free forms. Contrariwise, *-z* is a "bound form"; it never occurs in normal unstudied speech without some accompanying form; quotations of such bound forms in technical discussions among linguists have about the same frequency and special syntactical occurrence as citations of hoot owls among ornithologists.

Having established the notion of a free form, we have returned in a measure to our point of departure on the matter of a "word"; indeed, if it were not for the likelihood of confusion in terms, a free form might be called a "word." It happens that most of our conventional "words" are free forms; but some "words" are not free forms: e.g., *the;* and, vice versa, some free forms are not single "words": e.g., *the house.* To return to the problem with French, free forms may be isolated as follows: *je ne l'ai pas fait* (žənle pa fe, or colloquial Parisian, žle pa fe), *pas du tout* (pa dytu), *rien du tout* (rjẽ dytu), *du tout* (dytu, also means "not at all"), *rien* (rjẽ), etc. Note in these examples how free forms have been separated by finding parts of sequences successively standing alone. Note also that we have written *pas* (pa) as a free form, even though we have not found it alone. This is justified by its close parallelism in structural usage to such forms as *rien, personne, plus,* etc., which we do find standing alone; it is further justified by the serious disturbances caused in the whole pattern by the contrary assumption, in which case we should have to regard it as a suffix in *je ne le fais pas,* as a prefix in *pas mal,* and as a prefix in a very queer construction in *pas du tout.* On the other hand, though *tout* (tu) occurs alone, *du,* (dy-) never does, nor does it structurally parallel anything else that does; then again, its occurrence parallels perfectly sundry "prepositions" and the "definite article," all of which are bound prefixes in modern French.

But, though in a great many cases we find that free forms correspond to "words," we saw quickly that "words" are a quicksand to build on, while free forms can be established on a solid basis for any language. We may reasonably

ask, then, what it was that prompted us to expect that a system and general approach could be based on "words." And the answer appears to be: purely a traditional regard for the spaces we are accustomed to reading and writing between forms, reinforced by the fact that in many cases these spaces happen to be valid. But the placing of these spaces is an accident of history. When the Greeks, the Romans, the early Germans (in this case, Englishmen), and sundry others each in turn learned how to write, they divided their lines of letters in the course of time into groups which they intuitively regarded as free forms. Like many things done by people using their heads and having no cause for stale superstition, these divisions doubtless had a high degree of validity when first employed in each language. As time went by, changes in the language occurred: many free forms remained just that, and thus we find this illusory faith in "words"; but some forms have suffered radical change of status—yet we write *the* separately because the article was so treated in Old English; the French do the same for *je* because in Latin *ego* could stand alone. We tack our plurals on the end because that is what the Romans and early Germanic people did. If history by chance had brought writing to these people about three thousand years earlier, it is possible that today we might be writing a "word" *s* after a noun to make it plural. Had we mastered writing only fifty years ago, əpéyj əvíngliš máyt præps bimɔ̀r làyk ðís. Tradition is pleasant, but we must recognize the traps.

It so happens that these morphemes which never stand alone almost invariably occur with far higher frequency than do the independent type. Some languages have great numbers of them (Latin or Greek, for example); other languages have fewer of them, as is the case with English. All languages seem to have some. Because of the frequency of these dependent forms, the combinations into which they will enter, their individual meanings, and the meaning of resultant combinations are of great importance for the purpose of describing an individual language. For this reason the statements concerning these elements of high frequency are made separately from those appertaining to the less frequent elements. This treatment not only reflects the structural state of affairs in a language; it is of practical value to treat the elements in this twofold fashion, for, from the point of view of a prospective learner of the language or of the theoretical linguist, the most frequent elements must be known before anything can be done with, or said about, that particular language. The enumeration of these elements of high frequency and the statements of rules governing their combination are therefore assembled into what we call "grammars." The less frequent elements, which generally have far fewer limitations placed upon the combinations into which they will enter, are assembled and identified in the dictionary or lexicon.

Is the dictionary always right? If it is a good dictionary, generally speaking, yes, in the sense that it records current usage of these items. But, since the occurrence of these items is of much lower frequency than that of other units of the language and since individual men must gather the data, there is considerable room for omission or inadequacy of statement. The compilers could not conceivably have heard and read every statement made in that language during the period they set out to cover. But he is a bad grammarian indeed who makes mistakes of a similar nature in writing his grammar, for 99 per cent of his material can be verified over and over again in the course of a single day's listening to native speakers.

How, then, can there be bad grammars and good grammars if the compilers have such splendid opportunities to excel? In the case of the better-known languages there are rarely errors of observation in any grammar. Roughly speaking, the in-

dividual elements are always reasonably well identified. The inadequacies of a grammar are usually those of arrangement, a failure to observe and present clearly the patterning of the units, whether they be phonemes or morphemes. This does not refer to pedagogical arrangement, which involves factors other than those of linguistic structure. The inadequacies of most grammars stem to a large extent from a confusion of phonemes with orthography. That is why so much stress was laid above on the recognition of phonemes and the criteria for determining them.

A grammar may likewise prove inadequate in the analysis and presentation of the morphemes of a language and their combinations (combinations are often conveniently shown by means of paradigms, e.g., Latin noun declensions and verb conjugations). As we have discovered, the real, significant contrasts in a language are revealed by stripping all forms off, layer by layer, as we place contrasted segments side by side. We shall not find such forms by setting out with the plan of uncovering preconceived categories which we have decided ought to be there. Or again, on this basis we may claim to have found anything we want to look for. By putting certain words together, we define concepts which have been called "pluperfect" and "conditional perfect." But these constructs are not of the same order as, for example, the past tense. English, shocking as it may seem, has at most only four primary categories of verb inflection, and only two of these are tenses (if we wish to keep a useful term for identifying the category of time). The other two involve derivation which transfers the verb to another form-class, that is, adjective or noun. If you leave the verb stem bare or, if you will (since it is a significant contrast), add zero, the result is "present"; if you add *-d, -ed, -t* (a few verbs like *cut, hit* add zero), or change the interior vowel (*sing: sang*), the result is "past"; if you add *-d, -ed, -t, -n, -en,* or again alter the vowel (*sung*), the result is an adjective-participial form (without context one cannot tell which); finally, if you add *-ing,* the result is an adjective of a different sort from the last or a verbal noun. The only other thing that can be done, on this level of construction, to all English verbs is to inflect them for person and number—not six forms, as many a grammar will say, but three, if we wish to include the archaic "thou"-form: "second singular," "third singular," and "all other persons." For if we are to insist on six, which happens to be the Latin pattern, we must immediately expand that to include forms for the dual (two of a kind), a category which was universally distinguished in earlier classical Greek, Sanskrit, Gothic, Old Church Slavonic; was still preserved in the personal pronouns of our own Old English; and is still in use in certain dialects of Lithuanian and Slovene. Then we must further increase our number of imagined contrasts to include for the first person an exclusive form ("the other fellow and I"), a limited inclusive ("you and I"), and a general inclusive ("you and I and the other fellows"), for this distinction is made by the Popolucas of Veracruz in southern Mexico. On the other hand, for the second and third persons the question of number or inclusiveness never troubles a Popoluca speaker.

What is to be done, then, with such a form as *I had worked?* It obviously has a clear place in English grammar: *I had worked too hard* is very different from *I am worked too hard.* It is a construct on a higher level than that of *I worked.* It must be treated and described under phrase-formation, as we might call it, along with *I had a book, the book is read, the book is red.*

Why, then, have grammarians written about pluperfect tenses in English? Presumably because there was a pluperfect in Latin and Greek, two languages that for a long time were considered indispensable in education. A grammar of a language must confine itself to those

categories that are really present in that language and to the patterns within which these categories are framed. To set up the vast forest of categories found in other languages,[3] not to mention the limitless jungle that can be imagined *in abstracto*, is not only to burden the reader or learner with useless repetition and alleged refinements; it is simply tampering with and obscuring the pattern of the language—tampering with the very thing that makes that language what it is. For pedagogical purposes it is often useful to point out to the learner what the other language lacks. But that is not part of the grammar of that language; it is a combined commentary on the features which the learner's own language does happen to have and on the disparity of treatment among languages on how the universe is to be divided.

The foregoing remarks, therefore, make it plain that much of the existing grammatical literature is inadequate and misguided. This is as it should be; scholarship would be a poor thing if we did not make advances. It happens that the inadequacies of earlier work are sometimes striking merely because our advances have recently been rather rapid. This is good reason to rejoice; but it is not reason to disparage and carp at our predecessors with learned hindsight. Indeed, it is largely through the efforts of our predecessors that we have reached the degree of technical skill we now pride ourselves on, incomplete as those efforts may now appear in their own right. Our job is rather to take honest note of the advances made, profit by them, and push things further. Time spent in crowing over past ignorance is time lost to building our future reputations; good manners often make good sense.

Since the grammarian's millennium has not yet arrived and since most existing collections of past research are framed in "traditional" treatments, the serious student cannot yet escape mastering the older terminologies and systems; in fact, he must be able to transpose, where possible, from any one system to another. Otherwise, he will be unable to get at much valuable material and will also be at a loss to distinguish what is enduring from what is superseded, and validity from nonsense.

We have discussed the question of combinations of morphemes, their analysis and the statement of them in grammars, and the ways in which grammars, founded on accurate observation, sometimes succeed in obscuring the real distinctions which these combinations express. It was noted earlier that the morphemes themselves must be listed and identified in a dictionary and that there are thousands of them. Is that what makes *Webster's New International*[4] so fat? Certainly not. Dictionaries are usually regarded as being of a very different breed from grammars. In actual fact, the dividing line is very vague; it is merely one of convenience. The dictionary is the grammarian's scrap basket, into which go all the forms that do not so much defy analysis as require so many statements and lists as would make the grammar unwieldy. In short, there is a border-line area of linguistic formations that can go either way; either you may write more rules, or you may put the pieces back together and pop the form into the lexicon, which will be lengthy in any event. The decision is quite arbitrary in many cases. Sometimes the sum of the parts does not equal the whole: *un-bend*, *through-out*. Some cases are clear-cut:

[3] A negative conjugation for English verbs, for example (Japanese has one); or a "definite" declension for English nouns (Albanian has one); or a conjugation for English verbs following a particle (Old Irish had one).

[4] I pass over that monument of scholarship, the *New* (or *Oxford*) *English Dictionary*, because it tells one not only what the words *mean*, but what they *have meant* at different times in voluminous citations of literature culled from the Old English period on. It further gives the dates of occurrences and abundant quotations. As its subtitle demurely states, it is a historical dictionary. Never was a title more modest.

there is no advantage in saving one dictionary entry, or even twenty, at the price of five grammatical statements. In terms of the speaker of the language, this sort of instance probably means you have weeded out elements which he does not take apart and recombine in his daily speech.

English dictionaries use as their norm, in so far as they pretend to apply any strict norm, the stress feature of English—that is, if we ignore such encyclopedic information as weights and measures, coins, flags of all nations, the fine points of heraldry and armor, steam engines, dog breeding, and antiquated classifications of the languages of the world. In general, forms that receive one main stress get in; if you want to sell more copies over the drugstore counter you hold the gate open a bit longer. Historically, in general, dictionaries have simply grown, later works being compiled on the skeletons of earlier works. The men responsible were never much troubled about the definition of a word, free form, etc.; they simply explained what they thought not to be self-explanatory, whatever that is. This accounts for the somewhat sprawling nature of most dictionaries—and for their astonishing gaps.

The criterion of scope for a dictionary is best decided on the basis of the language under consideration. Mongolian, being a pleasant, tidy affair, can be well accommodated by listing little more than the morphemes; wholes rarely fail to equal sums of their parts. Old Irish perhaps wins the prize at the other end of the scale. Not only do the same problems arise that crop up in English; several hundred of the most common verbs are irregular, some so much so that several dozen forms must be quoted for certain verbs (the verb *to go* builds its forms from six recognizably different stems).

III

I have stated above that, in his linguistic attempt to catalogue the universe, man uses two principal methods, omission and combination. We have glanced at the process of combination, whereby the basic building blocks—morphemes—may be combined to express extensions in various directions of a nuclear idea. I use the term "omission" as a label to characterize the directions which these extensions of the nucleus may take. To subdivide the universe into all thinkable categories would be an endless and hopeless job for any language. Consequently, by the simple process of omission, different languages select particular directions for overt grammatical expression. This point was briefly touched upon when we considered the ways in which a grammarian might write a bad grammar. It was suggested that the bad grammarian, in his eagerness to force English into the mold of Latin and Greek, had overlooked all manner of further possibilities which Latin and Greek do not happen to display. In other words, Latin and Greek, like all other languages, have their own idiosyncrasies on the subject of how the universe is overtly to be divided.

To simplify the argument at the time, I purposely restricted my illustrations to categories that are readily understandable to an English speaker, even though his own language does not happen to treat them in the same way, if at all. It was noted that Japanese has a negative category in its system of verb conjugation. Any English speaker knows what a negative form is and uses negative phrasal inflection with present and past verbs (*I don't go, I didn't go*), and he may wonder why one can say that English does not have this grammatical category throughout its constructions. In English the form *not* in verb phrases other than those just mentioned is a purely lexical item; that is, it belongs to a class of English forms that may optionally occur in certain combinations and positions in a sentence. It is parallel in many ways to the word *already*, for we may substitute one form for the other in statements of the type *I have not gone, I have already gone*. The grammatical process of substitution in this case is no different from the

process displayed by a contrasting pair, such as *that is a white horse, that is a black horse.* In other words, to express negativity in such expressions, an English speaker merely extracts the item *not* from his bag of morphemes if he wishes to use it, just as he adds the item *white* to the sentence when he wishes to be specific about the color of the horse. There are several classes of constructions into which *not* may enter: *I have not gone, It is white, not black, Not that I wish to intrude,* etc. But when a Japanese negates a verb he inflects the verb itself in a special way, much as we do to express a past tense.

Thus in Japanese it is impossible to utter a verb form without showing implicitly whether the action is positive or negative. That is why I referred above to *overtly* expressed categories. The real categories in a language are those which may never be left unexpressed in any utterance containing a form to which such categories apply.

Now that we have defined the nature of categories and how they may be recognized, it is of interest to see how different linguistic groups have sliced the universe and what slices certain groups may never leave unexpressed. To start from home ground we may mention a few from English: number, person, tense, case (genitive and nongenitive, the latter split into subject and object for *he, she, who,* and the restricted number of nouns for which these pronouns may be substituted[5]): contrary to widespread opinion, English chooses a rather small number with which to slice its universe. On the basis of naïve arguments often heard, English must then be a singularly poor language. Nevertheless, we seem to get along; later on, we shall return to this question of how we manage. Sanskrit employs a much wider range of categories, but most of them are things with which we are familiar from the Latin and Greek tradition in our education. To mention a few: case (eight of them), number (singular, dual, and plural), person, tense, mode, infinitive form, voice, gender. A fairly full supply, it would seem, but in the view of some speakers, as we shall see, a rather biased view of the universe. Most of the Slavonic languages show a range similar to that of Sanskrit, and for a very good reason, since they have simply preserved categories found in the common Indo-European parent-language. Slavonic, however, shows a striking development of another category, that of aspect. It is impossible for a Russian, Pole, Czech, Serb, or Bulgarian to utter a verb form without specifying whether the action is regarded as finished and done with or as in process of development. Thus, for the equivalent of any English verb, one must select in Russian one of two verb forms.

When we mention gender, we usually think in terms of masculine, feminine, and neuter. We are familiar with this feature from German, Russian, Sanskrit, Latin, and so forth. French, Spanish, and Italian limit the gender category to masculine and feminine. This often has notning whatever to do with biological sex: a French table is feminine, a Spanish hat is masculine, a German young lady is neuter. In view of such disparities, it would perhaps seem better to label genders with A, B, C, or something of the sort.

The independence of sex and gender becomes more striking when we find that the Bantu languages in Africa normally distinguish about a dozen genders. In all the branches of this great linguistic family, all nouns belong to one or another of these gender classes. For most classes there is a corresponding plural form, but there is often no correlation between the semantic value of the noun and the class

[5] For example: *Father*$_1$ *ate an apple. The apple made father*$_2$ *sick. Father*$_1$ and *father*$_2$ do not differ in form (as do Lithuanian *tėvas: tėvą*), but they differ grammatically in the substitutes which they demand: *He* ate it. It made *him* sick. A word like *apple,* on the other hand, shows no such distinction, whereas Lithuanian would have *óbuolį: obuolỹs,* respectively, with change of ending and of accent. Likewise, there is no distinction in *Make your father (him) happy: Give your father (him) an apple;* here Lithuanian would have, respectively, *tėvą (jį): tėvui (jám).*

to which it belongs. Unlike European languages, these gender markers appear in the form of prefixes. Thus in the Zulu language the stem *-ntu* means "person"; *umuntu* means "man"; plural *abantu* means "people." It is from this form, which has cognates in all these languages, that the name of the whole family is taken.

It is convenient here to point out that any alleged connections between the so-called "primitive" cultures of some peoples and the kinds of languages they speak are quite groundless. There seems to be a tendency to attribute to the languages of primitive peoples naïve inarticulate simplicity or, contrariwise, exuberant complexity, owing to an inability to generalize.. The latter point might seem superficially to apply to Bantu. Hosts of the languages of the world, including modern English, remain to be described according to principles now considered valid. Yet with the data at hand it is crystal clear that there is no reason whatever to infer that there is any connection between cultural level, accomplishments of civilization, and linguistic structure.

Many groups in the world have no categories of tense, which seems so important if we think only of European languages. They simply specify, if they feel the need, "yesterday," "tomorrow," or "many long years ago," much as we do for the color of horses or for the matted mess the moths have made of Grandpa's old uniform—Sierra Popoluca of Veracruz, which ignores tense, has an affix for nouns to denote old, used, or unwanted objects. We, who feed regularly off pronouncements that so often begin "I have it on good authority that . . . ," "Competent observers . . . ," "I am instructed to inform you that the records of this office disclose that . . . ," tend to overlook the presence within our own borders of many a native language that neatly covers all events not directly observed by casting the verb in a quotative mode. Some of those languages boast double quotatives, inflections that inform the hearer that the quoted source in turn had it secondhand. This is no more a matter of meticulous intellectual honesty or scholarly acumen than it is in our case when we say "houses" on seeing more than one of them. A dubitative mode for English could relieve much of the stylistic tedium of a Ph.D. thesis or a foreign correspondent's communiqué.

Thus we discover by inspecting sundry languages radically different from our own that the number of ways in which the universe may be sliced or the number of segments that may simply be omitted is varied in the extreme. To be sure, certain concepts, such as plurality, time, location, and direction, find frequent overt expression in grammar. But if we cast aside the limited and arbitrary preconceptions with which we have linguistically lived all our lives, the complete relativity of categories emerges in its true perspective as a cardinal feature of language. When one considers *in abstracto* the vast range of possibilities that exists, it becomes obvious that no one language might reasonably be expected to display a complete roster of all conceivable categories. Such would only defeat the purpose of language.

If we could afford the mnemonic overhead of vast numbers of categories, most sentences could be turned out in the form of concise, highly organized, unitary words. Some languages are famous for their apparent approach to this state of affairs. In the last century Max Müller, discussing the causes of the Crimean War, said that a Turk could explain the whole difficulty in a single word: "because of their not having been able to be made mutually to love one another."[6]

[6] *sevistirilemediklerinden.* A Sanskrit drama opens with the word *paryaṅkagranthibandhadvigunitabhujagāśleṣasaṁvitajānorantahprāṇāvarodhavyuparatasakalajñānaruddhendriyasya,* "of him who squats with a knotted girdle wound between his knees, like the embrace of a twice-folded serpent, and with his breath checked, all his consciousness ceased, and his sense-perception dormant." This form is, however, very different from the Turkish example, since it is a huge compound of elements that could just as well be rephrased as I have done in the English translation and since it has only one inflexional morpheme—the *-asya* on the end, which makes

Many complete statements may be found in Eskimo in the form of a single marathon word. But then again, many a Turkish statement can be found that to our way of thinking is extremely wordy.

In the case of various languages employing complex and highly inflected forms of expression, it has been my experience that this apparent ability to embrace a large number of concepts in a single unified form is not a characteristic of combined complexity and brevity of an order foreign to, e.g., English or French. It is merely a function of structural emphasis on concepts which we recognize every day of our lives but which we are under no structural compulsion to express in every utterance. We simply specify such things by using more words when the occasion demands it. Contrariwise, many languages entirely ignore certain things which we could never leave unexpressed.

Classical Mongolian is a good example of this difference in emphasis. It paid strict attention to sundry combinations of time and completeness of a verbal action and had an elaborate way of turning verb forms into nouns, with the result that a subordinate clause may be said not to have existed in classical Mongolian. Yet distinctions for singular and plural nouns and third person subject pronouns did not exist in this language; if there were two or three or lots of something or if there was a possible ambiguity as to who was doing what, a Mongol simply stated such details by using more words. "What you lose on the swings you gain on the roundabouts"; and we might add that English, viewed through Mongol eyes, would seem just as queer.

IV

We have seen that, of the vast range of sounds the human mechanism can produce, each language selects a very limited number and that many languages differ considerably in their choice. All languages agree in using a comparatively small number of meaningful building blocks, when we consider the complexity of the world inhabited alike by Wall Street brokers, Buddhist pundits, and Hottentot cowherds. Individual languages differ strikingly in the combinations they permit and the categories they choose in order to expand the scope of these individual units and to link the isolated forms into chains of fruitful and relatively unambiguous utterances. Above all, it is clear that the possession or lack of particular categories is no hindrance to free communication in a linguistic community.

We are now in a position to make some general statements on subjects relating to language that are frequently misunderstood. It is often remarked that some people speak their language poorly, or ungrammatically, or that most people in such and such a place do so. I have arranged these allegations in ascending order of asininity. Many people prefer Mr. Churchill, E. B. White, or Faulkner to the London cabby or the Brooklyn soda jerker. That is a matter of taste and style, conditioned partly by considerations of prestige, environment, and individual temper. Stylistically—that is to say, in matters of arrangement of *optional* sequences—certain individuals excel; some people tell jokes very badly. Linguistically, all native speakers handle their own dialect neither poorly nor well; they simply speak it, if we discount slips of the tongue.

To say that people speak "ungrammatically," if by that one means "without a grammatical system," is pure rubbish.[7] All normal human beings learn at an early age to make themselves understood within the framework of the patterns obtaining in their own linguistic society. People frequently lack adroitness in finding the happy expression; many people are diffuse or insufficiently specific in their choice of terms in a complicated discussion. If a person speaks ungram-

the entire noun genitive singular masculine. This sort of thing became a literary trick in Sanskrit.

[7] We must recognize that "ungrammatically" also seems to mean "in a linguistic fashion I don't like"; to move direct from this meaning to the one suggested above would be the same as my insisting that all rubbish is homogeneous because I have just called it "pure."

matically, he can probably best be located in an institution or under a grave marker. Most human beings seem to enjoy playing ball. Some play cricket, others football. Regardless of whether you aspire to be a star, if you don't obey the rules the game breaks up.

The notion that most people speak incorrectly is a pure contradiction in terms. Such a statement can be reinterpreted in three ways. To maintain that most people can behave in a nonstandard fashion requires somewhat better logic than Messrs. Aristotle, Russell, Carnap, or Quine can supply.

To say that most people are now speaking differently from the way they did some time ago is a platitude that supports no judgment one way or another. Of course they are; this has been happening continuously at varying rates in different groups from the inception of our earliest records of language. If the past is any indication of the future, dialects will continue to mushroom, though perhaps with new divergences and less speed than could have been foreseen before the age of *Life*, *Look*, and the radio.

The third possible interpretation hinges on the word "correct" or "proper"; and it is on this point that an enormous and disproportionate amount of confusion has arisen and been perpetuated in the province of normative grammar—that branch of linguistics that concerns itself with what people "ought" to say. Effective or colorless *style* is possible within any given dialect, in its own terms; that is not the point at issue here. Forms such as *ain't* and *he don't* are the prevailing forms in many American dialects. From a purely linguistic point of view these are the "correct" forms in these dialects, in the sense that that is what those people normally say. However, in the sense that these forms are not admired and acceptable in certain groups, they are not "correct" for purposes of finding favor with such groups. But this is a very different sort of "correctness," and the two must not be confused. When a German speaker says *He has gone already home,* he has made an "incorrect" construction, not because it is socially unacceptable but because it is not English; a native English speaker does not make this sort of "error." It is "correct" to wear coats and trousers (but not kilts) to keep from catching cold and to avoid entanglements with the law of indecent exposure; but if you want to cut a figure at a swank club, it behooves you to look to the cut and quality of the tweed. The conventions of human society are inescapable, and anyone looking for a job or wanting to hobnob with the "right" people must conform to a degree. Whether this is a good thing is not for a linguist to say; it is simply a fact. It is, however, the duty of a linguist not to confuse the criteria involved in these linguistic situations.

The honest way to handle this sort of "correctness" is to label it something like "Linguistic Recipes for Swank Speakers." That is really what most of our normative grammar is, and thus it should be subject to just as exact analysis as anything else. There is, of course, nothing wrong with all this, just so long as we know what we are doing and recognize it for what it is.

Some people express aesthetic preferences or, more commonly, revulsion for certain languages. I hope that I have been able to show a few of the many ways in which speakers of different languages manage to say practically everything they ever need to. It should be obvious, then, that, since all linguistic mediums seem to be equally adequate and at the same time equally arbitrary, a question of choice is irrelevant. People who grow up eating corned beef and cabbage or curdled goats' milk think them splendid foods. There is, to be sure, a somewhat greater mastery and ease of control to be enjoyed in the use of a language than in the eating of foods. But, again, the language which every man handles most easily is his own language. On that basis the choice should be simple. Some people may like French because it reminds them of that extravagant winter down near the Pyrenees. Such a preference is extra-linguistic.

TEACHING HUMAN RELATIONS

Hugh Cabot and Joseph A. Kahl

In recent years the term "human relations" has been applied in many fields to describe highly divergent activities. In Harvard College the phrase is used to describe Social Sciences 112, a course in general education.[1] Its aim is to further the students' understanding of face-to-face human interactions. Its content, selected largely from the social sciences, is chosen to provide illumination of the situations which the students meet in everyday life and is taught by the case-discussion method.

The course, now in its sixth year, is well suited both to specialists and to nonspecialists in social science and thus represents one way of including knowledge in that area in a program of general education. At the present time, there are five sections of about forty-five students each, meeting three times a week during the full academic year. Though the course is open to sophomores, the students are drawn primarily from the junior and senior classes.[2]

[1] For an over-all account of Harvard's general courses in the social sciences see David Owen, "Harvard General Education in Social Science," *Journal of General Education,* V (October, 1950), 17. For two statements of purpose by the founder of the course see Wallace B. Donham, "An Experimental Course in Human Relations in Harvard College," *Journal of General Education,* II (October, 1947), 8, and "Why Experiment? The Case System in College Teaching of Social Science," *ibid.,* III (January, 1949), 145.

[2] This article does not attempt to make a definitive statement for the whole Harvard staff group but expresses our views as to the nature of this course and the methods by which it is taught. Similar courses, which vary in detail, are taught in several other institutions, including Kansas, Colgate, Ohio University, and Cornell. Some are direct outgrowths of the work at Harvard; others have arisen independently.

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WHAT IS HUMAN RELATIONS?

Is "human relations" a readily definable unit of knowledge like history, literature, or psychology? Perhaps the answer to this question is that it is as much a unit of knowledge as "general practice" would be in the study of medicine. Surgery deals with a particular group of problems and the techniques for handling them; internal medicine deals with another group and with the techniques useful there; general practice, on the other hand, deals with all these specialties and their application to the problems of the particular patient involved. Similarly, human relations brings together basic concepts and techniques from the several disciplines of social science in order to interpret and deal with particular human beings in their face-to-face relationships.

Those disciplines have wisely separated things for detailed study that are not, in fact, separable in the world itself. This separation is a necessary way of looking at parts of a situation so that a particular part may be thoroughly understood. Yet vital questions are constantly being raised by students that deal with the relationships of the parts of social experience to the whole. Teaching several introductory courses in the separate disciplines about society cannot directly answer these questions. Indeed, this method tends to assume that the students will find ways of integrating the material for themselves and will then know how to apply this integration to specific situations, a task that many find

most difficult.

Human relations can be described as a unit of study designed to overcome the difficulties of integration in social science. In addition, it seeks teaching techniques that help the students gain skill in the use of their knowledge at the very time that they are acquiring it, and it seeks to keep those techniques flexible, so that the needs of students for understanding can be met when they arise.

Most of the students in this course are not going to become specialists in social science. Yet they live in a world of people and, in fact, are continually searching for a fuller comprehension of their relations with these people. The first step in discovering what contributions social science can make to their knowledge is to do what all good teachers do: listen carefully to the students. If given an opportunity, students will talk about the areas of human behavior that most interest them.

The next step is to discover, by directly studying adult men and women, the problems that the students will face after they graduate from college. Here the experience in the new field of "applied social science" is most illuminating. In recent years, businessmen, government leaders, community workers, physicians, and others whose tasks require an ability to deal successfully with people have turned more and more to social science for counsel. Among the social scientists, some have felt that such consultative activity would not help them further the requirements of their own fields. But others felt that the very segregation into the disciplines which had made possible the development of knowledge now prevented its effective use in concrete situations. Often, the vital consideration was the connection between one particular body of knowledge and another. What weight, for example, was to be given in the specific instance to personal motivation as understood by psychology against cultural conditioning as understood by sociology? Both were clearly in the situation and were parts of a whole that had to be grasped as such. After all, concrete fact is the focus at which the various social sciences must integrate.

Many of these men began to learn that there existed skills of observation and a body of knowledge distributed among the several disciplines which were helpful and practical in dealing with the full complexity of life-situations. The disciplines on which they drew most heavily were social anthropology, clinical psychology, and sociology. By trial and error, conceptualizations were gathered which proved fruitful in the understanding of everyday affairs.

Thus the problem of teaching human relations was one of starting with the students' existing interests in human behavior and developing them to the point where they led to the questions that concerned adult men and women. The work of the applied social scientists offered many instances of the way in which scientific knowledge could be used in the solution of those questions. But how could their techniques be transferred most effectively to the classroom? The answer seemed to be that a number of life-situations should be studied in detail and the attempt made to practice the needed skills of observation and analysis. So a type of "case method" was developed.

In short, "human relations," as we use the phrase, is a unit of study assembled for a special purpose out of the various social sciences, plus a particular technique for teaching it.

THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The books and articles in social science that present the point of view which the consultants found useful have been assembled in a carefully annotated bibliography. The students read this material as a background for the case discussions; it suggests new insights that, combined with those arising from the students' own past experience, add depth to the discussions. A detailed description of that

literature is hardly necessary here, but it does seem useful to indicate briefly the major ideas introduced to the students.

A primary problem raised in the literature is that of social observation. How does one observe one's fellow-men? A common tendency is to create stereotyped classifications on the basis of inadequate information, assuming that they are objective descriptions of fact. These classifications contain hidden assumptions about what is good and bad, thus confusing what is with what ought to be. Such confusion of facts and values is quite natural, for a man's value system is vital to the organization of his life. With it, he orders the bits and pieces of his experience into a meaningful scheme, thereby gaining a necessary sense of security and stability. So great is the comfort thus provided that he is likely to distort the facts if they seem to contradict the values. He necessarily tends to observe his fellow-man with vision limited by his own past experience and current needs. What he sees is as often the projection of himself as it is the image of another. Recent experimental evidence from the visual-perception laboratories has confirmed what students of man have long known: one sees what one is trained to see and wants to see, as well as what is "really there."[3]

To respond adequately to the situation with which one is faced, it is important to see what is "really there," to learn how to control observations. A first step is simply the recognition of personal values; a second is an understanding of their source in group experience. Social anthropology offers the opportunity of recognizing the full impact of cultural conditioning by examining contrasting cultures. The wide disparity makes the individual conscious of what he had previously taken for granted and helps him discover how much he has learned from those around him which is not just inherent in "human nature." Thus he can become more tolerant of others and no longer get upset because differing experience makes others see the world differently. Such tolerance need not undermine his own beliefs; he need not insist that his values are right for everybody in order to feel securely that they are right for himself.

It is necessary to recognize that since an individual's own personality is the instrument through which he sees others, he can improve his understanding only through a better insight into himself. Observing another human being involves a complicated process of looking inward as well as outward. Charles H. Cooley well named the procedure "sympathetic introspection." One observes another engaged in some specific behavior, then tries to imagine one's self in that situation and to respond with appropriate emotions. Obviously, the pitfalls in this process are many and deep: one may not fully perceive the situation as it impinges on the other fellow; one may assume that one is more like him in impulsive response than the facts warrant; one may have a variety of needs that push one toward a kind of comprehension that is useful to him rather than truthful to the situation. But, like it or not, such pitfalls are an integral part of the complexities of social observation, and it is necessary to understand them.

Inevitably, this examination of the process of social observation raises questions about the interdependence of the parts of personality that can best be answered in terms of the modern clinical theory of human nature: personality is a dynamic whole and not merely a summation of stimuli and responses. One's emotions, intellectual thinking, even perceptions, are linked together, each influencing the other in a system of mutually interdependent variables. Through such an approach it becomes clear, for example, that, in dealing with a present teacher or a future foreman, one may also be

[3] See, e.g., Earl C. Kelley, *Education for What Is Real* (New York, 1947), and Hadley Cantril, *The "Whys" of Man's Experience* (New York, 1950).

dealing with a past parent. Comprehension of that relationship brings it to consciousness and permits control of its influence on social perception. One can thus see the ways in which the teacher and the foreman are different from the parent. Then one can act appropriately to the demands of today and tomorrow rather than only to those of yesterday.

As self-insight develops, a growing recognition comes of the ties between one's self and certain key people in the social environment. These fundamental relationships tend to shape one's whole life. Naturally, relationships with parents and siblings are basic. They are especially crucial to undergraduate students, who are at an age when they are trying to readjust their lives by loosening the parental ties and establishing new, long-term connections with contemporaries and with new types of authority figures, such as teachers and bosses. They find an intellectual study of these relationships tremendously illuminating and greatly helpful in their attempts to make the necessary emotional changes.

Another useful perspective comes from an understanding of the way in which words are used to relate one's self to the world. Words are tools not only of communication but also of thought and perception. Words are "loaded" with all sorts of emotional connotations from past experiences that are transferred to the words. The loaded words become signals for what may now be inappropriate responses. One confuses the past situation, the words, and the feelings within one. A study of elementary semantics helps to overcome this tendency and aids in viewing the world more clearly.

A realization of the difficulties in accurate social observation should not lead to the pessimistic conclusion that it is impossible. Indeed, social research has developed a special tool for this purpose: the interview. It is found at its best in psychological clinics and in the hands of field research teams in industry and community. A study of material from those sources cannot by itself produce high skill but can provide an ability to listen with a deeper comprehension to the meanings that lie behind the words of one's friends, bosses, or employees.

An awareness of the dynamic interconnections between the many factors that go into the makeup of personality raises the question of analogous forces holding small groups together in social systems. Within this framework, questions of leadership and authority become a dominating theme, for students want to move from the dependency of childhood to activity that preserves individual dignity while permitting co-ordinated action for a common good. They are anxious to learn ways of becoming followers without being servile, leaders without being despotic. Here the findings of the social scientists who have acted as consultants in the world of affairs are significant. Industrial sociologists, for example, have shown the radical difference between the authority of "order and forbid" and that of "co-operation through joint purpose."

The foregoing theoretical statements represent a point of view that goes counter to the previous experience of many students. This perspective may require, in effect, that the students reorganize their way of looking at themselves and the people around them. They may have to give up pet stereotypes to conceive of the other man in the context of his unique life. They may have to learn that the feelings and emotions of men are as significant as reason in producing action. They may have to learn to listen before talking. Often experience has forced students to spend great energy in trying to repress emotions and behave "rationally," with the dangerous result that they tend to assume that other men will always do likewise.

It is extremely difficult for some students to readjust to this new perspective. After all, their old ways of looking at the world are more than merely habitual; they serve to stabilize relations with the

environment. Such viewpoints are reinforced by emotional bonds with the parents who have taught them. Thus, to change perspectives, students must do far more than learn a new type of conceptual scheme (such as in learning algebra); they must often learn to behave differently in areas of life that reflect the core of their personalities. Such learning comes slowly as a result of activity in new situations that demand it. It is often accompanied by deep feelings of frustration (which can be the foundation of new insight if well handled).

Therefore, a course in human relations that presents a conceptual scheme and does no more is a course that denies its own content about the nature of man. It must also provide practice in the analysis of real situations through which the students can slowly adjust to the modifications in their behavior demanded by class and instructor.

We cannot take students in general education into the field for research or clinical duty to provide such practice. We can, however, to an important degree bring life-situations into the classroom through the case-discussion method. This method is, of course, an old device in the teaching of law and medicine and to some extent in business administration and is in some aspects comparable to the laboratory method in natural science. It is a technique for learning how to apply scientific abstractions to concrete data. Abstractions are useful tools when they are applied to reality; they are dangerous traps if they are substituted for reality.

We attempt to co-ordinate the abstractions of social science with the facts of everyday life by presenting the students with two major tasks. They study books and articles in which trained social scientists have analyzed a body of data and arrived at a set of abstract concepts which "explain" it; and they participate in class discussions of case materials during which the concepts from the books are introduced when useful and validated against fresh data. This double activity can train the students to analyze beneath the surface of raw data, as well as to question the applicability of general concepts to a particular body of "brute" fact. Through such experience, the students do more than learn intellectual concepts—they can absorb the concepts into habitual response patterns, making them active tools with which to deal with the world.

THE CASES

The cases we use are brief, factual reports of life-situations. They are not illustrations of theories. The distinction is crucial to the technique of teaching that we are to discuss here.

Every teacher enlivens his presentations with vivid illustrations. He knows that the student's memory will retain the illustrations longer than it will the teacher's more abstract words. He usually chooses extreme instances that colorfully symbolize the point he is trying to make, as a poet uses a metaphor. Consequently, the illustration is far from an average or commonplace sample of life. It is chosen so as to minimize complications that might obscure the teacher's point.

By contrast, a case such as we use is chosen to represent ordinary life "as is." It is an attempt to bring common situations in their full complexity into the classroom for analysis. Real life is always made up of situations that would illustrate a dozen theories; indeed, this is the very fact which makes difficult the application of laboratory methods to social data. The variables are usually many and mutually dependent, and they seldom stay put long enough for an "other-things-being-equal" analysis. Although careful consideration of such an analysis often enables the student to understand the various factors more clearly, it is not only the comprehension of these individual factors that is important. There must also be a technique of estimating *how much* each of these factors influences a *particular* situation and how one is to

combine them into a meaningful whole. It is necessary not only to know the parts of a total situation but *how* these parts fit together and what is the "nature of the totalness"[4] which results. A case presents such a totalness to the students, and the discussion searches for an understanding of it.

The cases we use are all "true." They come from research files and represent as great a variety of situations as possible, all within the range of the probable experience of the students. Perhaps the main areas included are those of the family, friendship and clique groups, college activities (among students and also with respect to administrative authorities), work activities, and community organization. Each case contains verbatim accounts of conversations and all the available factual background material. The case is usually written from the point of view of some individual involved. It does not, directly or indirectly, through choice of words or point of view, contain any judgments on the part of the author as to whether the situation is good or bad; it does not contain any analysis as to why things happened as they did—unless, of course, the author is clearly one of the characters of the case, and then his opinion may be included. Thus it is quite different from the kind of case found in the files of a welfare agency or a psychiatrist. The students' job is to understand the "whys" for themselves.

It is not important that all students come to an identical understanding of each particular case. In this respect a case is like a chapter from a novel—a slice of experience that is incomplete in itself, that contains clues to the past and implications for the future, that challenges a controlled imagination. No author expects that each reader will see or be interested in exactly the same things in any chapter.

One of the big advantages of using cases to stimulate discussion is that they create especially strong student motivation. The students "identify" with characters in the case, and thus the problems of the characters become problems of the students themselves. Harnessing this energy to constructive analysis is the teacher's great opportunity. The students become interested in the objectives of the course only if the teacher chooses cases that foster identification.

On this basis the course starts with cases close to the immediate experience of the students and moves slowly into areas of greater complexity. Emphasis in the early weeks is on the individual—the way he sees, thinks, feels, and behaves with the people around him. From an analysis of such cases the students come to recognize the importance of group ties and social relationships. The group processes themselves then come readily into the discussion.

Action questions as to what ought to be done or what can be done or what is the best thing to be done in a particular situation are continually raised throughout the course. But effective action must be based on an adequate understanding of the situation involved. To help in dealing with this point, we tend to use in the first half of the course cases in which action problems are not clearly raised or where the complete situation, including the action taken, is given. This focuses attention on the diagnosis of the situation. Later, when the analysis is accomplished more skilfully by the students, we use cases that raise action questions clearly and often ones in which several alternative paths of action seem open. Such cases test the skills of human relations most adequately, once it is fully understood that decisions between the alternative paths rest upon the clarity of understanding of the total situation involved.

Although the cases can generally be ordered in ways that we have found

[4] See H. C. Metcalf and L. Urwick (eds.), *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett* (New York, 1942); and George C. Homans, "The Strategy of Industrial Sociology," *American Journal of Sociology*, LIV (January, 1949), 330.

meaningful to the students, this does not mean that they are all equally meaningful or that any case is meaningful in the same way to each class of students. Some classes will discuss phases of a case that others have been unable to see at all at that stage of the course, and it is a rare year when some student does not find in a case something pertinent that has never occurred to any of the instructors or to any previous class. We can generally select cases that will produce discussion in areas we consider useful for a given development of the course, but our conclusions remain tentative until a case has been tried with several classes. Sometimes a group will discuss quickly and dismiss as fully understood the points of a case we thought basic and then go on to struggle with those points we considered obvious.

THE TEACHER AND THE DISCUSSION

The basic conceptualizations plus the cases plus the individual group of students involved plus the teacher make up the discussion. The productivity of the discussion depends on the relationship of each of these elements to each other and to the earlier discussions. We have already commented on the theoretical points of view that underlie our thinking and the nature of the cases we use. The discussion of the students and the responses of the instructor to them are a continuous process, controlled more by the needs of the students than by the logic of the course schedule. As we have said above, the case material is ordered in a sequence that usually produces effective discussion. Within this limit the discussion starts and continues in directions that the students desire.

A basic objective of the instructor is to create an atmosphere in the classroom which rewards discussion in areas pertinent to the course *at the time they appear important to the student.* Since this is a wholly new experience for many of the students, it is not easy. Many students have spent years learning to please (or displease?) the teacher. They often walk a tightrope between a grade they consider adequate as a reward for good performance and the pleasure of sometimes "putting one over" on the teacher. They may have "internalized" the authority figure to a point where a statement which pleases him also directly pleases them. Everyone wants to be right; yet many students have no standard of what is right in intellectual work other than the word of constituted authority, just as they have no standard in the moral sphere other than what their parents and contemporaries maintain.

But the authority figure in these discussions does not behave according to the students' expectations. The instructor at first confines his authority to a statement that a particular case, which must have been read before class, will be discussed today; as discussion gets away from the case, authority may bring the students back to the case; as it becomes evident that certain students have read the case only superficially, authority asks embarrassing questions which suggest that a more thorough reading would be desirable. The instructor asks that students take the initiative as to when they shall talk; he states early and late that he wants everyone to feel free to talk but that he will not call on anyone who does not want to talk. He must set the limits within which the discussion takes place, but he must be interested in *any* discussion that takes place within those limits. In other words, the instructor starts with the assumption that the students will learn best when they are tackling problems that interest them and that his job is to create a situation wherein that interest is encouraged and allowed to motivate intellectual growth.

Often, in the early weeks, the students, in trying to be "right," use all their skills to maneuver the teacher into taking a stand. They want to know the best way to go about tackling a new case; they want an explicit statement of the difference between a case discussion and a

book discussion; they occasionally burst out in angry phrases that this is all nonsense, that, in so far as each man is entitled to his own opinion, obviously they are not going to reach any positive decisions or learn anything new.

Soon, however, the students become convinced that the teacher means what he has been saying and doing; that he is interested in *their* thoughts about *this* material; that he will help the discussion move forward along the lines of their interests whenever he can. They learn that the instructor is not going to force his ideas on them. He can and will clarify statements advanced in a blurred fashion, perhaps sharpening the point made, to allow the student to develop his thinking or to be more adequately challenged by another student. He will make explicit the unstated premises behind different statements. He will relate statements to ones made earlier and thus encourage interactions within the group. He will point out contradictions. He will help the students understand the importance to the discussion of their own and other students' feelings as well as their ideas. He will help them express, where desirable, feelings that are painful or embarrassing. Thus by his actions he slowly helps the students learn that the instructor's role is to help keep the discussion of this particular case moving clearly and productively for the whole group, rather than to indicate, either by positive statements of his own or by the leading questions he asks, just what he considers the "proper" solution of the case to be.

In this development of class initiative, there are many considerations that the instructor must keep in mind. In the early stages of his relationship with this group, perhaps the most important factors are the individual differences within it. The class is characterized, of course, by the students who are the most vocal. Intellectual skills and an ability to verbalize easily do not necessarily go together. A class may be led at the beginning by bright or dull students, and each must be handled carefully with respect to themselves, to the group, and to the development of the subject matter. The bright student must be helped to make his points clear to the group. The dull student must not be discouraged, for he often has some point that can be useful to the discussion.

One year the first student who spoke for an instructor on the opening day of case discussion talked steadily, scarcely stopping for breath until he had outlined the case brilliantly. The instructor felt that he could not have done a better job himself. From the point of view of a clear exposition of the case, nothing more remained to be done. From the point of view of teaching human relations, very little had been accomplished. The instructor remarked only: "That is very interesting. Have we any other thoughts?" and the class, having at that time listened only casually to the first student, discussed the case actively for nearly two sessions before many of the points originally raised were generally understood. The first student also learned that the group in the classroom has something to do with the situation as well as the individual brilliance of a single performer. He started to observe the thoughts of others, and this stood him in good stead when cases outside his experience were under consideration.

Students bring to the class many differing types of experience, and learning often comes from an understanding of these differences as they apply to a specific case. The case is on paper, presumably studied earlier by all; the objective stimulus is the same for each to see. But they do not see the same things. When they express what they do see, the students are forced over and over again to suffer the frustration of learning how narrow their own points of view really are. Through case discussion they understand it in a way that they never could, were they simply to listen to a standard introductory lecture in social science, which presents, for example, this same

fact through reference to Bacon's *Idols* or some other intellectual formulation. They begin to question their experience, to demand better techniques of observation that will minimize (though never eliminate) projection, that will allow them to get a little closer to the other man's point of view. They learn because their biases keep interfering every time they try to get their neighbors to understand the case the way they do.

Beyond the learning that comes from examination of differing perspectives applied to the same (and familiar) material comes that from the study of unfamiliar types of data. Here, with sharpened tools of analysis, the students work on facts that come from life-experiences they have not yet encountered. They come to recognize the great diversity of social roles that exist within our culture and within other cultures.

The case discussion through which the students gain this acquaintance produces an intimate understanding somewhat similar to that of a man who has known well many of his fellows. They have participated in a number of life-experiences, vicariously, it is true, but nevertheless with a substantial burden of decision whenever they talk. Often this simulated living is more useful than real life-experience itself, for it occurs under controlled conditions where both students and instructor challenge observations and conclusions and focus the wisdom of the entire group on the problems at hand.

One of the most interesting things to observe about the discussions is the way in which they change as the year passes. From a collection of individuals, the class turns into an organized group. "Leaders" arise and often collect an active group of "followers," who pit themselves against "rival" leaders. The students begin to expect one another to maintain certain consistent points of view, and they address their remarks to one another in terms of such expectations. Soon they realize that they are discussing not only the cases but also themselves, and, as this happens (at times becoming itself the subject of discussion), irrelevancies in the conversation decline. Consequently, the heart of each case is exposed more quickly. An organized universe of discourse emerges, and the group is able to discuss and decide with heightened efficiency. This may even reach a point where an observer who watches for the first time a class that has been together for several months misses much of the communication because he is unacquainted with the subtle symbolism involved. He does not share the collective past of the group and cannot readily understand it. Indeed, some observers may even go away with the feeling that the discussion was more chaotic and superficial than it was.

As the class grows in creative independence and as the instructor develops his relationship with the class, the students begin to indicate important holes in their experience, gaps where the greater knowledge of the instructor can be helpful. At times the students show clearly that they need clarification, expansion, or perhaps merely "pulling together" of the thoughts they have been discussing in recent sessions. It is on these occasions that the instructor can and must formulate the needed conceptualizations by short lectures. Even then, if the permissive relationship is to be maintained with the class, care must be taken to present these theories as potentially useful in the discussion of the case material rather than as dogmatically true.

As must be evident, this procedure is often as frustrating to the teacher as to the student, especially if he is relatively new to this type of teaching. He is likely to be a man who has spent years in learning an academic discipline; he has found answers to many of the intellectual problems that have seemed important to him by turning to that discipline. He probably feels that he knows, or should know, the answers to the prob-

lems raised in the discussion and feels impelled to spell them out for the students as quickly and precisely as possible. Yet this technique suggests that the time he is ready to talk is not necessarily the most productive moment for students to learn.

Group discussion of this sort permits the instructor to do what all teachers want but seldom have the opportunity to do: it allows him to be patient in his teaching and to find out what has to be said again in other ways and in different contexts so as to increase the students' understanding and application. Sometimes it is weeks before an entire concept is clearly in the heads of many students and more weeks before it is, in fact, used by any of them. But if the instructor is patient and if he fully accepts the fact that, because he has once said something clearly, it does not follow that the students have comprehended it, he will eventually have the great satisfaction of watching his ideas appear in the activity of his students.

The instructor, in creating the atmosphere which is conducive to productive discussions, is using a number of techniques that have been effective in therapeutic and industrial counseling of the "nondirective" or "client-centered" type.[5] But his aims are somewhat different. He is helping a group learn and apply a specific body of knowledge. Part of the objective—that of encouraging individual initiative and thought—is quite similar; but another part of the objective—that of developing the group's understanding of certain useful conceptualizations—is different. Thus the instructor must keep any individual student from controlling the discussion if the student's needs of the moment are not shared by a sizable number of the group. Sometimes these needs are too personal or relate directly to some matter that has been satisfactorily handled by most of the class. A student may need to retell some past personal experience related to the cases discussed in class which he has never fully understood and which has left an unpleasant emotion. Under such circumstances the instructor must hold individual conferences with the student to help him with his further learning.

The line that an instructor draws between student conferences as an aid to the course and counseling to solve major personal problems is difficult. It hardly serves the purpose of this course for it to become an adjunct of the college's clinical facilities or to have any such label put upon it by the student body. On the other hand, the course may bring to light personal preoccupations that need clinical help. The instructor must be sufficiently trained to distinguish readily between the situations which are appropriate for him to handle and those beyond his time or skills, which must be referred elsewhere.

The necessities of exposition have forced us to describe in segments a process that we consider a unity. The nature of the relationship between the instructor and the student, both in class and in conference, the cases which are the foundation and focus of the discussions, the conceptualizations from the literature which illuminate the cases—all are of limited significance in themselves. Yet their synthesis creates a new kind of experience for the students which leads to a more effective understanding of human relations.

[5] See Carl R. Rogers, *Counseling and Psychotherapy* (Boston, 1942), and F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge, 1939).

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